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MEMORIAL

OF THE

REVIVAL IN PLYMOUTH CHURCH,

BROOKLYN,

[REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER,]

DURING THE EARLY PART OF THE YEAR 1858:

COMPRISING INCIDENTS AND NARRATIVES, AND ALSO FRAGMENTS OF SERMONS, LECTURES, ETC., BY THE PASTOR.

BY A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH.

"We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard.

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TO

THOMAS C. FANNING, ESQ.,

TO WHOSE KIND ENCOURAGEMENT IT IS MUCH

INDEBTED, THIS LITTLE BOOK IS

GRATEFULLY DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE sole aim of these few pages has been to minister to the pleasure, and it is hoped also to the profit of the great numbers, both in our vicinity and at a distance, who have asked so eagerly for details of the remarkable religious awakening which has recently taken place among us.

The recital is, perhaps, neither as lengthy nor as full as might have been desired. It claims only to be a sketch; and if it shall succeed in enabling some to picture for themselves what they have desired to see, yet have not seen; if it shall help others to recall things which have been to them both delightful and useful; and if, further, it shall serve to show by what simple methods a daily gathering for prayer was rendered so intensely interesting and attractive, and shall be in anywise suggestive in this respect to others, it will have fully answered its purpose.

BROOKLYN, September 9, 1858.

THE REVIVAL

IN

PLYMOUTH CHURCH.

"We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

THE universal religious interest which sprang up in the community in the early part of the winter of 1857, did not manifest itself in Plymouth Church quite as early as in other churches of Brooklyn. The excessive crowding of our Sabbath services has become a thing so habitual as to be no token of any extraordinary state of the public mind, and there were those who began to say, "Lord, revive *us!*" Not that we were by any means without evidences of the presence of Christ; on the contrary, the unusual attendance at the evening lecture and the Friday evening prayer-meeting were tokens of an increasing interest in spiritual things. There had been no effort made to render these meetings more attractive, or to induce persons to attend. The increase was altogether spontaneous, and could not fail to awaken attention. The sermons of the pastor had been, perhaps unconsciously to himself, and we certainly believe without any effort *on his part*, more than usually striking. Who that

was present at the March communion season can forget the sermon from the words, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." And not only the sermon, but the prayer before the distribution of the bread, when it seemed as if he who uttered it stood face to face with Christ, and spoke with him as a man speaketh with his friend. His venerable father expressed the feelings of many hearts, when he said in the succeeding prayer, before the passing of the cup, "Lord, we thank thee for the opening out of thy word this morning; we have been brought very near heaven; we see not how we can ever be any nearer till we stand within the very gates." Truly the Spirit was among us that day, and the revival had begun though we knew it not. Perhaps a more remarkable season still was the last Sabbath but one of the year. Mr. Beecher preached a very impressive sermon from "God so loved the world," and at the close gave as a reason for his more than usual earnestness and explicitness a letter which he had received the week before from a young man in New York, who described himself as sinking slowly but surely beneath the temptations which he could not escape, and who implored help from the impending destruction which he felt awaited him. "Preach to me," said he, "the terrors of the law; *any thing* to arouse me from this fearful lethargy." *Mr. Beecher responded* by preaching the LOVE of God

in Jesus Christ as the only remedy for man's sin, and, said he, "If this remedy fails, I know of no other; if *love* will not save you, *fear* will be of no avail." Few eyes in that vast audience were dry that evening, and many were the hearts that joined in the pastor's closing prayer for a blessing on the whole service, and especially on this young man. Feeling was quietly but surely accumulating in the congregation, and though there was as yet no great outward demonstration (save on special occasions, such as the one of which we have been speaking), yet the clouds were steadily gathering which were before long to burst in such copious showers. Many of the members of the church, hearing of the interesting scenes taking place in other communities, became very anxious for a similar visitation in their own, and expressed a wish that their pastor would work in this direction. To this he took occasion to reply in the week meetings, by avowing his disbelief in a got-up revival, telling them that if the *spirit* of revival was found in us the revival itself would certainly follow, wholly disclaiming the idea that it was his place to do any thing more than he was already doing, and casting the entire responsibility of the matter on the people of his charge.

On the last Sabbath in February he preached from Hab. iii. 2, "O Lord! revive thy work in the midst of the years"—showed the reasonableness, usefulness, and Scriptural nature of revivals, combated objections against them, and finally put it to his people whether

they ought not to have a revival. On Wednesday evening, March 10, the first droppings of a gracious rain were seen. Mr. Beecher spoke to a crowded and deeply interested audience, on the conversion of the Philippian jailor—his own heart was full, and so were the hearts of his people; all was now ready, the electric wire waited only for the touch, and that night the touch was given.

Mr. Beecher opened his subject by remarking that he thought one grand difference, or rather cause of the difference, between the results of the apostles' preaching and that of our day might be found in the different amount of faith exercised by them and by us. The apostles labored in the full expectation that their labors *were to be blessed*, they looked for fruit after every effort, and they did not look in vain. *All* their hearers were not saved, but they never preached, so far as we have any testimony, without *some* results. He confessed that he himself had been greatly lacking in the exercise of this faith, expressed his determination to *expect* in future that God would own his labors, and declared decidedly that he believed God would own the effort of that evening.

It was plain that his soul had caught fire, and, if we may be permitted to use the words of his father, "whenever there is a revival in the heart of the minister, it is sure to follow quickly in the hearts of the people." There was much feeling manifested, *and at the close* a short prayer-meeting was held, and

for the first time those who desired to ask the prayers of God's people for themselves were invited to rise. Opportunity was also given for others to ask for relatives or friends, on whose behalf they were anxious. The invitation was largely accepted, and a very solemn scene ensued. The meeting closed at a late hour, with a promise from the pastor that he would be there the next morning at the usual eight o'clock prayer-meeting. That was an evening long to be remembered. A member of the church who was detained at home, in spite of a very strong desire to be present, well recollects her brother's glowing countenance as he returned, saying, "Oh, what have you not missed!" "I know it," she replied; "I *know* that you have had a refreshing season; I know it by my own prayers offered up for both pastor and people during your absence. From that evening until the 3d of July following, the meetings were continued with unabated interest, and only three times did the pastor fail to occupy his chair.

The history of those meetings, as he himself observed at our closing, will never be known on earth, but their record is in heaven. The spoken part would fill volumes could it be gathered up, but what shall we say of the multitudinous thoughts and feelings which never found utterance save in tears or smiles. *These* never can be written. It would be utterly vain to attempt any thing like a history of these marvelous *and* delightful seasons, so precious to mem-

ory. The utmost this little sketch proposes to itself is, to gather up a few fragments of the feast, so that something may remain. We would, after the example of the Israelites, fill a vessel with the manna of which we and our brethren have eaten, and lay it up in the ark for a testimony, hoping that, like the old manna, it may long preserve its freshness, and bear witness to our children of the goodness of our God.

The great charm of these meetings has been the simplicity, the entire absence of formality, and the perfect freedom which have characterized them. Strangers have come in among us, and said, "We perceive of a truth that the Spirit of God is here, for here is liberty." The church is indebted for this distinctive element of Christian liberty mainly, under God, to its pastor. Perhaps no man living has entered more fully into these two features of true Christianity, *liberty and love;* and certainly no pastor inculcates on his people more faithfully the apostle's injunction, "Use not your liberty for an occasion unto the flesh, but by love serve one another."

The morning prayer-meeting has been in Plymouth Church emphatically a "love-feast," the attractive influences being love to Christ, to the pastor, and to one another, in full and lively exercise. Many is the hearty welcome which has been given in that place, of which the members are wont to speak as "our own *dear* lecture-room,"—many the warm shake of the *hand and affectionate* greeting bestowed there. There

seemed to be a manifestly growing consciousness of the family relationship, and no better description can be given of these meetings than that of a happy and united family, gathering together under the guidance of a beloved and honored father for morning worship. No wonder that men as they passed along the street, though unused to a prayer-meeting, could not resist the voice of song which fell on their ear daily in the sweet morning hour, and no wonder that once having entered they should be fascinated by the scene which met their eye, and warmed by the atmosphere of love which they breathed, and should return, saying—"Surely God is in this place, though we knew it not; this is, indeed, the house of God, and this is *none other* than the gate of heaven!" There was no such feeling as that smiles, or even an honest laugh, were sinful—smiles and tears mingled in curious proximity without any attempt at restraint; in short, every thing was natural.

It would not unfrequently happen that the brethren would not get their tongues loosed till somewhat late in the meeting, when Mr. Beecher would observe—"What a pity that we cannot turn our meetings round, so as to have the end at the beginning. You seem to get thoroughly warmed up just when it is time to close." Every inducement that could be thought of he would hold out to encourage freedom in speaking, cheering the weak and the timid by words of kindness, infusing hope into the downcast,

and plying the persistently silent with all kinds of persuasives and stimulants to bring them to open their lips for Christ. Sometimes the entire speaking time would be occupied (and never more profitably and delightfully) with the narratives of young converts—not *always* men young in years. They would tell, each in their own way, of the wonderful change which had come over them. One would bring tears to all eyes as he told, in a voice broken with emotion, of earnest and appealing letters from an absent mother and young sisters, beseeching him to go to some prayer-meeting where the Lord Jesus was making his presence felt, and allow the blessed atmosphere to touch his spirit, and assuring him of fervent and unceasing supplications on their part. He would tell how he was irresistibly led to follow their advice, and how Ananias came to meet him, saying—"Brother, the Lord Jesus hath sent me unto thee that thou mightest receive thy sight." A gray-headed man would tell of long years of backsliding and misery, broken in upon by the love of God leading his footsteps to the place where the message of mercy was sounding—would relate how the ice melted in the sunshine, the tears began to flow, and the wanderer at last returned to take shelter beneath the roof of his Father's happy home. Another would relate how he was fairly sung into the kingdom by his wife, who, having herself tasted that the Lord was gracious, *could not be contented* unless her husband shared her

happiness. He would tell how her cheerful voice was heard, whether engaged in the care of her little ones, or in other household affairs, singing the sweet songs of Zion, and as she went about the house he would now and then hear some words of, "Jesus, I my cross have taken," or, "Must Jesus bear the cross alone?" Then when her heart became so full she could not contain any longer, how she broke her husband's completely, by saying to him, with an appealing look, "I love Jesus, DO YOU?" For eleven years he had listened to Mr. Beecher's preaching, and "again and again been convicted, though nothing more than convicted, but his wife's appeal melted him, and the work was done."

Another, whose occupation may be known by the language in which he spoke, made us smile by the announcement that he had "served the devil pretty faithfully for some thirty years," but he thanked God he had switched him off the track last Sunday.

An old sea-captain, with a weather-beaten face, would get up and tell how he had been quite unused to meetings of this kind, but on returning to his native place and finding a revival there, he was led by curiosity to enter a prayer-meeting, when much to his dismay he became conscious that the tears were rolling thick and fast down his cheeks. An acquaintance who was with him comforted him with the assurance that this was merely the result of his want of education, and he would get over it. He tried

another meeting, but with no better success; he became "uneducated" each time, and finding he could not guide these feelings, adopted the plan of letting them guide *him*, the happy consequences of which it is not necessary to relate at length. This worthy brother became known among us as "our uneducated friend."

One brother, greatly beloved in the Lord, became noted through the number of shipmasters with whose cases he made us acquainted, and to whom he was in very many instances the instrument of salvation. Himself formerly a sea-captain, his sympathies were with men of that profession—he understood them, and labored diligently among them. So frequent and so interesting were his narratives, that we insensibly acquired the habit of looking to him to give spice to our meetings, and sometimes when the other brethren were less communicative than usual, Mr. Beecher would look toward our friend, and say, with a quiet smile—"Brother D., haven't you any more sea-captains to tell us about?" Brother D. was never appealed to in vain, and long and affectionately will he be remembered as a means of quickening and refreshing to very many. His own experience, given by himself, was not among the least interesting. The son of a devoted Christian mother, he was converted many years ago, and, being married at the time, immediately established the family altar. His mother *resided with him*, and of course joined in the daily

worship. She was unusually gifted in prayer, and formed in this respect a strong contrast to her son. One day she unfortunately made some criticizing remark with regard to his prayer, and his mouth was shut completely; from that time until the present, a period of eighteen years, no one had heard his voice in prayer, or in any way on the subject of religion. In the early stage of the meetings he was called upon to pray, and refused; but feeling dissatisfied and unhappy afterward he sought an interview with Mr. Beecher, explained his case, and asked his advice. The result was, that he never again refused to pray when asked, and often spoke when unasked. Once having opened his lips, and broken the spell which had bound him so long, the difficulty had vanished, and vanished we believe forever; the man who had been so long, like Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, now delights to honor his Lord openly, and counts it an honor to be permitted to confess Him before men. "I am willing now," said he, "to be a stammerer and a fool for Christ's sake." It is written, "Them that honor me I will honor," and this was verified in Brother D.'s case—from the moment he became willing to stammer for Christ, his tongue was loosed, and he spake plainly. His illustrations, drawn from his nautical experiences, were very striking and useful. One little specimen must suffice. The subject which the meeting had been led to *dwell on* was, "Confidence in God in time of

trouble." He related that on one of his passages between New York and Liverpool, when he had all his family with him, there arose one night, when all were quietly asleep, a sudden squall of wind, which instantly threw the ship on her side, and awoke all the passengers by the violent crash of things falling all at once. Every one was alarmed and uneasy; most of them left their berths and began to dress. His little girl, who was just eight years old, awoke like the rest, and inquired what was the matter; on hearing the cause of the trouble, she simply asked, "Is father on deck?" and being answered in the affirmative, immediately lay down again, and soon was as soundly asleep as ever. We imagine that our assistance will not be needed in making the application.

Mr. Beecher during these meetings has made short dissertations on a great variety of subjects, and had his remarks been preserved it would have been, to say the least, interesting to note what a wide scope has been taken in. Nothing was ever prearranged, and yet every day was different. Faith in Christ, hope, love, joy, gratitude, patience, temptation, fear, sorrow, sickness, death, heaven, moral duties, cares, responsibilities, the education of children, the formation of habits, the family altar, the study of the Scriptures, these, and many other subjects growing out of them, have been familiarly talked and prayed over, and we have no hesitation in saying that some of the most *valuable instruction* ever given to his people has been

at their meetings in this totally unpremeditated manner. His remarks have been peculiarly happy in meeting the many and varied wants all around him, and it seems as if the promise made to Moses had been also fulfilled in him—"I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what to say." We can give here only one or two examples, and even in these know that we fall far below the original. The topic one morning was, "The different modes of feeling in which men are led to Christ."

"Some come by the intellect, some by the will, few by the gushing forth of the heart's love; yet none enter into *the liberty* of life in Christ till they have had this revelation of him in their souls. They may be Christians struggling to serve Christ; mourning and grieving that they cannot do it better, and they want but this experience of love flashed through their souls to make all light and joy. But just here it is that the power of the minister ceases. I can preach so as to arouse men's consciences and stimulate their wills, but beyond this I cannot go, and it is at this crisis that souls need prayer and assistance. This is the difficulty—how shall I cause them to *see Christ?* It is very much as when two persons are walking together at night, and one, lifting up his head, sees a certain star, and points his friend in the same direction, and he looks and looks, but sees nothing; and the other points again, and says—'Why, it is *just there, as plain as* the sun in the heavens, and you

can't see it!' His friend tries again, and again fails. At last, however, its ray catches his eye, and it stands out bold and clear, distinct from all its companions. 'Why,' says he, 'how strange I could not see it before; you did not point right!' Now he tries to lose sight of it, and cannot; he shuts his eyes, but sees it still. So it is with souls when they catch the first glimpse of the love of Jesus. I preach to them and talk to them, but all seems of no avail. At last in some happy moment this truth of love flashes upon them, and they come to me, and exclaim—'Oh, how strange that I never saw this before! Why did not some one tell me?' Why this is the very thing I have been laboring to show you, by every power I knew how to employ, and you would not see it! So it is; this is an experience no man can give his fellow. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth, *so* is every one that is born of the Spirit.'"

A gentleman from a distance congratulated us one morning on the state of things existing among us, adding that we little knew what we were doing, for the influence of Plymouth Church is felt from one end of the States to the other. "When Plymouth Church is awake," said he, "the country is awake."

Mr. Beecher remarked that he should be very sorry to see any kind of confidence springing up among us in "*Plymouth* Church Christianity." Suppose that

a pane of glass should begin to glory in its knots and wrinkles, taking them for ornaments, because they rendered it conspicuous, how we should laugh; why the very beauty of glass consists in its being so transparent that you look through it without knowing there is any thing before your eye. Now what knots and blemishes are in glass, that is self-consciousness in a church. This is our only safety, "Forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth to those things which are before, *let us press* FORWARD."

One Monday morning he related to us a little incident, if incident it may be called, which had occurred in his night's experience. In short, to be plain, he told his dream. "You know," said he, "that my usual frame of mind is hopefulness. I am apt to look at the bright side of things, and take cheerful views of life. On this very account an occasional experience of sadness is an inexpressible luxury to me. Last night, I know not why, but I could not sleep for some hours, I lay restlessly, turning from side to side, till this morning between one and two. No sooner was I asleep than it seemed to me I was in an Episcopal church, robed in black, where a clergyman was celebrating the Lent service. By-and-by he ascended the pulpit and began to speak. There was no eloquence in his language, nor any thing particularly striking in his mode of dealing with his subject, but his heart was evidently in it. He was setting forth in simple *language* the sufferings of Jesus, and as I

listened there seemed to rise up before me a vivid conception of the Saviour in his last agony on Calvary. I gazed till the tears gushed from my eyes, and I awoke to find my pillow soaking wet. I composed myself again to sleep, and my imagination took up the stitch just where I had dropped it, and knitted on. I beheld the same vision, and again the tears flowed. I gazed and wept until it seemed to me as if my very soul would dissolve, and the fountain of tears be itself exhausted. Again I awoke, and again falling asleep the vision was for the third time repeated, and I seemed to weep my very life away. I know not when I had before such a sweet, rich experience of the love of my Saviour, and when I awoke finally this morning it was with a tenderness of soul I cannot well describe. I felt thankful that I was not permitted to sleep sooner, and that when *I did* sleep I made so good use of my time."

The effect of this simple narration was to bring the auditory into sympathy with his own state of feeling, and not a few tears were shed that morning.

Perhaps the lack of sleep and the dream might be in some measure accounted for by the previous day's labors. He had preached twice, with even more energy than common, and his morning's sermon was a full and glowing exposition of the love of God in Christ Jesus, as declared in that text of texts, "God *so* loved the world."

Each morning the little table, so familiar and so

endeared to those who are in the habit of attending the week-meetings of Plymouth Church, was covered with pieces of paper folded into small compass, very insignificant looking externally, but a mighty volume when read. At about one quarter of an hour before the close of the meeting, Mr. Beecher would rise and take these in his hand, reading them aloud. It is scarcely necessary to say they were requests for prayer. It would be indeed impossible to give any idea of the great number of these, their variety and urgency. Though fresh petitions were presented every day for the space of fully three months, we do not believe the same case was ever presented twice. Husbands were brought by anxious wives without consulting their will, parents by children, and children by parents—friends by friends, and neighbors by neighbors, and laid at the feet of Jesus, with the earnest entreaty that he would heal them, and as the fame of the Saviour's presence spread abroad, they began to send up to us from other cities—yes, and even from other lands. Our petitions reached out after the missionary sailing to Africa, the sea-captain bound for the distant shores of the other hemisphere, the Scotchman tarrying long enough in our midst to love us and be loved by us, the merchant from Illinois or Wisconsin, the wayward son in California, the officer in the army in Utah, the broken-hearted shipmaster burying his wife and son (of yellow-fever) in Cuba, the *Episcopal church* in Liverpool, the German in the

ardor of his first love hurrying back to his native land to carry his newly-found treasure to his friends and kindred, the young student returning full of zeal to Amherst or Williamstown, and the long-praying but well-nigh discouraged sister in England. It was touching beyond expression to hear the voices of these and many others, saying—"Pray for us, for we hear that the Lord is with you."

After reading these, Mr. Beecher would say, "Are there any here who desire to make requests on behalf of their friends?" and immediately responses would begin to come up from all parts of the assembly. The timid voice of a wife would be heard, saying—"I ask prayers for my husband;" or a mother would ejaculate, "My children!" a young girl, half-rising in her place, would say, "For my father;" or another, more shrinking still, the tears trickling down her face all the time, would stammer, "For a father, mother, three brothers, and four sisters!" A manly voice at the farther end of the room might be heard saying, "For my wife, who is beside me, and who I know desires your prayers, though she is as yet too timid to ask them; and a little girl of ten would ask, on behalf of "Five little girls, my companions." It seemed as if the whole assembly was moved at this part of the service—requests poured in from all sides, as if they never could be exhausted.

Mr. Beecher would then say, "Are there any who *desire to ask on their own* account?" A solemn

pause of a second or two would ensue, and then a middle-aged lady would rise in her place, and anxiously seeking the pastor's eye would, as soon as recognized, hastily resume her seat; others would follow in rapid succession, young men in their early prime, boys just verging upon manhood, men past the middle of life, women of all ages and circumstances. The mother of a family whose children had grown up round her, the young wife in the freshness of health and happiness, the poor toiling women who walked two miles every morning to meeting, carrying her baby, because she could not leave him behind, and the young lady who had hitherto been absorbed in the pleasures and gayeties of the world. It was Mr. Beecher's practice to acknowledge each one by a gentle inclination of the head, and his attitude and whole appearance on these occasions will be long cherished in the memory of his attached people.

If this narrative should meet his eye, it is hoped he will forgive these personal allusions. It would be impossible to give any fair statement of facts, or one in any degree satisfactory to those most interested, without perfect freedom in relation to many things which, if we consulted mere personal feelings, we might perhaps feel disposed to keep quiet among the heart's sacred and secret memories. We are not afraid of being misunderstood, for no one that has frequented those assemblies but has his or her own little world of *feeling, in* connection with the place and people

with which "a stranger intermeddleth not;" no pew but is sacred and endeared to many a heart, no inch of ground but has been consecrated over and over again by the foot of affection; but we are wandering.

There were differences in the manner of rising that were often indicative of the various states of feeling, of which this act was the external manifestation. Some would stand boldly, and remain a moment erect, while others would only half rise, casting a timid and beseeching look toward the pastor; and some would make the attempt, but not being able to catch his eye just at that moment would let the opportunity pass, and bury their faces, striving to *conceal* the deep feeling which they were unable to *control*. Then, in a low, soft tone, would come the words, "Let us unite in prayer," and instantly every head was bowed. The prayers which followed these scenes were the most precious opportunities of communion with the Lord Jesus Christ which we were ever permitted to enjoy. We believe that he who uttered them was taught of the Holy Ghost, and that he spake as the Spirit gave him utterance. In this view of the subject we do not fear to speak of them, for we shall not be supposed to intend mere encomiums upon language, however beautiful or eloquent—still less upon him who, through the medium of communication between Christ and his people at these times, would shrink, as we well know, from any ascription of merit. We think that *he might transfer* to himself in some measure the

words of the apostle, "By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all; *yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*" The many petitions were gathered up with remarkable accuracy, and yet with the utmost ease, into a marvelous bundle (if we may be allowed the expression), which was cast at the feet of Jesus. It seemed as if the Saviour was actually present, not in the ordinary way in which we speak of his presence, but close by us, within reach of our breath, and so exquisite was this sense of communion that we could have continued in the exercise of prayer, as it seemed to us, for hours. There was an exuberance of faith and love in these utterances, not usually found in prayer; a gladness on the part of the speaker, and a recognized consciousness of gladness on the part of Christ. They were the breathings of love into a loving ear. Never was there exhibited a spirit or manner such as would imply that Christ was unwilling to give, and only allows himself to be persuaded by our importunities.

On one occasion, when growing very earnest, unconsciously, perhaps, raising his voice, Mr. Beecher suddenly paused, and said—"But, Lord Jesus, what do we speaking to thee thus? We would check our tone—forgive us that we have allowed ourselves for one moment to think we were as anxious to be blessed *as thou art to bless* us. We speak to thee as if thou

wert hard to be entreated, as if thou wert inclosed within an impregnable fortress, and only by persuasion and tears we could prevail on thee to come forth; whereas, thou hast stood without, knocking at the door of our hearts, until thy locks were wet with the morning dew. We know how *we* feel when men do not believe us, when they will not trust us, and we know how infinitely more tender art thou; we would not grieve thee, blessed Saviour, by unbelief; we would be more careful of thy feelings than of those of the most sensitive earthly friend."

We always concluded with a hymn, for Mr. Beecher was wont to say that he liked to send us away with a full tide of song, and for a long time our choice for concluding hymns lay between "Shining Shore" and "Homeward Bound." These two hymns have become inseparably connected with this revival season, and we believe that were there no other record than their simple words and melody they would be effectual in preserving many sweet reminiscences of things gone by to return no more. We well remember the introduction of "Shining Shore." The papers were circulated at one of our Friday evening meetings. Yes; on Friday evening, April 3, 1858, there was added to our "Collection of Hymns," already pretty extensive, one other which was destined to be a formidable rival of many of the old ones. Yet we should not have predicted this at first sight, for we ourselves *were not so much* attracted by it, and indeed were

disposed to regard it rather coolly; but it was not long before it was triumphantly inaugurated queen of the meeting, and we yielded our homage with the rest. It was soon in all hands; the poor sick woman would beg us to sing it as we sat by her bedside; the mother would weep over it as it reached her ears early on the Sabbath morning, sung by her children at the piano in the adjoining room; and the boys and girls of the Sabbath school would shout it with jubilant voices, proclaiming it unequivocally their hymn, "par excellence." The third verse became distinguished as Mr. Beecher's favorite, because he would so often call attention to it; and once, when he had just finished it, he stopped us, saying—"I don't believe you have half understood the meaning of those words. Sing them again, and see if they do not cling to you as long as you live." We did sing them again, and I imagine we are not likely to forget them. "Should coming days be cold and dark," &c. On one occasion, being rather pressed for time, Mr. Beecher gave out only two verses; but a day or two after, under similar circumstances, said—"We will sing the whole; for when I divided it the other day, I received a rebuke for so doing, and found I had committed as grievous a sin as if I had divided Solomon's child."

"Homeward Bound" followed a few weeks later, and from the first obtained general favor. It would be difficult to adjust the balance of popularity between *these two* hymns—nor is it necessary. They

are stationed like two guardian angels, the one at the entrance and the other at the egress of our "Lecture-room Hymn-books;" but better than this, they have won for themselves a place in many a memory and many a heart. They have become "household words," as precious in the family as in the sanctuary, beloved of the children as of the hoary grandparents. "What shall we sing?" we inquired the other day of a little girl, nine years old, who asked for a hymn. "Sing 'Homeward Bound,' if you please," was the quick reply. We readily complied, and having finished, were admonished that the next visit we made we must sing "Shining Shore."

At the conclusion of the meeting there was always a grouping together of little parties all over the room, and round the platform a complete crush, every one anxious, if possible, to obtain a word, or at least a shake of the hand from the pastor. We do not know whether his patience was ever a little taxed by the exuberance of good-will manifested toward him, but he certainly bore up under it remarkably well. From the very first there began to be persons who would wait to see him for conversation on personal religion, and the number of these increased so rapidly that it became a practice with him to devote the greater part of the morning to them. Thenceforward one of the regular notices on the Sabbath was, "There is a *prayer*-meeting in the lecture-room of this church *every morning*, holding one hour, at the close of which

I remain as long as it is necessary, for religious conversation with those who may desire it." There were daily a considerable number who did desire it, and it was not unfrequently necessary for him to remain until near the hour of noon. No one could fail to be struck with the spectacle which that plain, sober-looking, well-worn room presented on these occasions. Scattered up and down in its seats were men tarrying for an interview with the pastor, before going to their usual avocations—the merchant, the clerk, the mechanic, the phrenologist, the musician, the employé of the theater, the bar-tender, the fishmonger, the day-laborer, rich and poor, all were there with the same purpose. In other seats might be seen mothers, wives, daughters, anxiously, though patiently, waiting for their turn. Some would be evidently under the influence of powerful emotion; others, more quiet and composed, would employ the interval of time in reading hymns, or perhaps more frequently in conversation with some Christian friend. And here it is but just to make mention of a lady who rendered important service to many at this stage of their experience, and who will be gratefully remembered by numbers in connection with this season of religious awakening. The two sisters who were among the first to be prayed for were also among the first to avail themselves of these opportunities. "Do you know," said the younger, one day, "that my sister is a *Christian*. She had some talk with Mrs. B. in the

lecture-room, and she made every thing so plain to her, she went home and followed her advice, and has been quite happy ever since." We replied, advising her to try the same counselor for herself, and it was; not more than half an hour from that time that she told us, with a joyful countenance, that "Mrs. B. had made her a Christian, too." We are happy in being able to testify to the genuineness of the work in their case, and to bear witness to their stability, consistency, and progress in the new life. We might quote many more such examples, but in the brief space we intend to occupy solitary instances in every direction must suffice—an *ample* history, it is not in our power, nor is it our purpose to give.

Mr. Beecher would go from one to another, comforting, encouraging, advising, instructing, as the case might be. Could the history of all these cases be written, what a volume would it be! Of course, with the great mass of these we are unacquainted; delicacy would forbid to speak of most of them, but we may, perhaps without offense, mention one or two that came under our own notice.

One morning, just as we were about to leave the lecture-room, a young friend said—"Won't you go and speak to that lady, she seems in so much trouble?" We went in the direction indicated, and seating ourselves by her side, endeavored to ascertain the cause *of her sorrow* that, if possible, we might suggest comfort. *To all that* we said, she only replied—"There

is no mercy for *me*—there is no mercy for *me*." Finding it useless to talk to her in her agitated state, we left her. Three days after we saw her in the same place, and hastened to inquire concerning her welfare; but the cheerful countenance with which she met us told the good news before she had spoken a word. "Oh," said she, "I have been very foolish and wicked to distrust my Saviour so, but it is over now. I thought when I saw you last that I never should come out of that black cloud of despair. I went home," she continued, "and threw myself on the bed, exhausted and spiritless, inwardly resolved not to rise till I felt better. I fell asleep through very weariness (not having slept for many nights before), and dreamed. I thought I was on my way to meeting, but when I got to the church it was surrounded by water. I approached the edge, the stream was wide and deep, and I found it would be vain to attempt to ford it. I was much perplexed, and walked round to see if there was a more favorable place, but to no purpose. I stood pondering the matter in utter hopelessness, and at last exclaimed—'I cannot get there; it is impossible!' Just then I turned my head, and saw on my right hand a man whom I instantly recognized as Christ. He held out his hand, saying—'I will lead you through, the water shall not overflow you." I drew back, and shook my head—'No,' I replied; 'I dare not venture, it is too deep.' He still waited, and renewed his offer. I summoned up my

courage, and decided on making a venture. I grasped his hand, and he led me into the stream. The water rose higher and higher, but I clung to my Guide, and he conducted me safely through. When my foot trod the firm ground he disappeared, and I awoke. I was much struck with this dream, but it did not comfort me as much as might have been supposed. The next day, however, light broke in suddenly upon me; all my doubts and difficulties disappeared, and I was filled with joy and peace in believing."

Another morning we were introduced to a lady who, with tearful countenance, had been waiting to speak with Mr. Beecher. We accompanied her home, and spoke to her as best we were able, but she was too much under the influence of feeling to say many words for herself. We saw her a day or two afterward, and she was more communicative. She had only been to the meeting once before the time when we first met her, but she had been touched to the quick, and had risen for prayer. She was earnestly seeking Christ, and of course it was not long before she found him. The third time we called, she was happy and rejoicing. She could not remain away from meeting now, and though a baby and other little ones claimed her constant care, she would run away to the precious sanctuary that she might have an interview with her Saviour before the cares of the day *had* begun. Now all her desire and prayer was for *her husband;* he was regular in attendance on the

Sabbath, but had never been in the morning meetings, and she longed that he should try the means which had been so eminently blessed to her. On the Friday morning following she succeeded in bringing him with her, and he went away quite impressed—that evening she presented herself before the examining committee as a candidate for membership. This was too much for her husband; he could not bear to see his wife step from his side to perform an act which seemed to him like a separation between them. With a troubled heart he returned alone from that Friday evening prayer-meeting; and now the die was cast,—his wife's God should be *his* God, and *her* people should be *his* people, and, like Ruth of old, he added, "The Lord do so to me and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." The next morning he came again to meeting, and rose to be prayed for. The happy wife eagerly communicated to us the good news, and the Friday following he also took his place among the candidates, and standing up before his brethren boldly confessed his faith in Christ.

There was a large proportion of young people to be found there; some who, for years had been the subjects of prayerful solicitude on the part of Christian parents, and some who, on the contrary, were setting out on their pilgrimage, in spite of every obstacle which education, home, and the close ties existing between father and child could present. There were those who *had* been taught from their earliest years

all that *man* can teach concerning the way of salvation; and there were those who, in the midst of enlightenment and abundant Christian privileges, had grown up in the grossest ignorance as to any thing of a spiritual nature. There were Episcopalians attracted by our living, glowing prayers and praises, and constrained to quit their own beautiful form, in the use of which they had grown formal. There were Quakers earnestly inquiring about the new birth, that mysterious subject to which their attention had lately been awakened, laying aside the prejudices of early education, and eagerly seeking after the truth *as it is in Jesus*. There was the Unitarian and the Catholic; yes, and even the infidel. There were all grades of character, from the moral and externally pure to the open and hardened sinner. There was the good husband and kind father, and there was the man who had become a very terror to his own household, and frightened away from him those who should have nestled in his bosom. There were all ages, from the gray-headed man of sixty to the little child of eight, who would beg her mother to let her remain and talk with Mr. Beecher, and whom we have watched, as she looked so earnestly into his face, and drank in so eagerly all he had to say.

"This has been the happiest week in my life," said a young friend one Sabbath, pressing our hand in one *of hers*, while with the other she wiped the tears of *joy which stood* in her eyes. "My sister thinks she

has given her heart to Christ, so does another young lady, one of my most intimate friends. I am so happy I scarcely know what to do." The next morning they were all there in the lecture-room waiting to communicate the happy tidings to their pastor.

Mrs. Stowe, who was visiting at her brother's for some weeks during this period, also remained in the lecture-room, and gave her kindly sympathy and counsel to any who would receive it. And we know that her assistance was appreciated. For several Saturday mornings she gathered together, in a smaller room, as many of the young people as were able and willing to join her at the close of the prayer-meeting, for the purpose of instruction, preparatory to their union with the church. Many of these inquirers were visited at their own houses by some of the members of the church, principally by the lady of whom mention has been made before. We know that these visits were among the most effective modes of usefulness, and have learned from some of the recipients how helpful they found them, and how grateful they were for the timely assistance. "Angels' visits," they would style them. "Ah!" said one of these dear friends to us one day, "I have been thinking if Christians such as our pastor and Mrs. B. are so good, *what must the Saviour be!*" We believe that scarcely too high an estimate can be formed of this system of visiting "from house to house," and when, through the multitudinous nature of his labors, this becomes

impossible to the pastor, the members of his flock should endeavor, according to their ability, to supply this lack, and we are well persuaded that those who engage rightly in this labor of love (and to be effectual, it must be *emphatically* a labor *of love*), shall in nowise lose their reward. Though we have spoken only of one as being active in this work, yet we would by no means have it supposed that hers were solitary efforts. We could tell of an esteemed and beloved brother who, after a day of toil and care in the busy city, would yet devote all the evenings which were free from other church engagements, in calling on the newly-received members of the church; and we know how often his wife, already fatigued with benevolent labors in the former part of the day, forgot her weariness, and cheerfully accompanying him, found that love made the labor light. We could speak of a second Mrs. B., whose name is intimately associated in the minds of many, with the one already mentioned; we could speak of her zeal, and diligence, and love manifested in the same line of effort; we could point to another brother, whom it will not be necessary to designate further than as the one to whom we are indebted for the publication of the "Address in Burton's Theater;" we could tell of his earnest and unwearying labors among the young men of the congregation, of his fervent prayers on behalf of the unconverted, but we could not tell the half, simply because we do not know it. *This* we know, however,

that he will cheerfully give his testimony to the blessedness of the work in which he has been engaged, and to the faithfulness of the Master who never leaves his servants without their hire. We have already spoken of the beloved brother now on the other side of the Atlantic, and his marvelous successes among those "that go down to the sea in ships;" and we might name another who is well known as the faithful friend and visitor of the sad—in short, we might speak of many whose usefulness we know, and of still more, we doubt not, whose quiet, unobtrusive efforts are unknown to us, but seen and approved, as we rejoice to know, by the ever-watching eye of Christ. May the time soon come when every one who joins himself to the visible church of the Lord Jesus shall consider himself as a laborer in the vineyard, pledged by that very act to live and work for the interests of his Master, and acting out the Apostle's injunction—"As ye have opportunity, do good unto all men, but specially unto them which are of the household of faith."

The fruit of all this prayer and effort began quickly to appear in the numbers who presented themselves at each sitting of the examining committee. We say "the fruit," not that we would have it understood that this was *the whole* of the fruit. We believe that the entire results and ingathering into the kingdom of Christ are by no means to be limited to those who have united with Plymouth Church. Strangers have come in *among* us from all parts, and have gone away

carrying with them fire from our altar (God forbid that we should say it boastingly); members of other churches have come to be stirred up and refreshed, and have gone away more "valiant for the truth;" and many have felt the happy influence who never saw us, and never will see us till we meet one family in our Father's house. Nevertheless, our own special reaping as a church has been a very rich and glorious one, and it is in the spirit of heartfelt gratitude and thanksgiving to him who alone giveth the increase that this little memorial is prepared. We like the patriarchal custom of raising up stones, or bestowing special names on special places as memorials of mercy there received.

The examining committee, consisting of the pastor and some of the older brethren, has always (we believe) held its sittings at the close of the Friday evening church prayer-meeting, and there was full liberty for the members of the church to remain, if they desired. Only a few months previous to the time of which we are speaking, there would not be more than ten or a dozen who would remain, and there would be perhaps five or six candidates examined. Now, however, it was no unusual thing to have twenty or thirty in one evening, and so interested were the church that the room would be almost full of attentive spectators—we can hardly say hearers, for it was impossible to hear the recital of experiences unless seated *very near to the* speakers.

It became necessary to give another opportunity during the week for those who could not avail themselves of the regular one, on account of its lateness, and Tuesday afternoon was devoted to the same business. We shall describe, as well as we are able, one of these meetings, and then give a few specimens of the various experiences which were given in.

The session we have selected for special notice is that of April 23, which was generally allowed to be the most intensely interesting of the season. It seemed as if our joy had then reached its culminating point, and we fairly wore ourselves out with delightful excitement. As Mr. Beecher observed the following morning—"We laughed and cried by turns, and hardly knew which to do most the whole evening." On this evening it was that three members of the pastor's family presented themselves, namely, his eldest son, the eldest son of his sister, Mrs. Stowe; and the only son of his deceased brother George.

The room was crowded, many standing in the upper part anxious to hear.

Among the first to be examined were the three already named. It touched many hearts to see them there, but when their voices were heard giving their testimony for Christ, and when the pastor said in a low and subdued tone—"Will the brethren propose any questions to my oldest son?" tears and sobs broke out all around, and for a few moments we lost all power to *listen*, and could only *feel*. We know that

we speak much of *tears*, and it is inevitable, for during this whole season they have flowed very freely; our sowing and reaping have both been done tearfully, though at the same time joyfully.

"This is truly Pentecostal," observed Mr. Beecher, as his eye glanced over the assembly and he became conscious of the deep emotion pervading it. He himself was radiant with happiness. "I am so joyful," he said, "that I can hardly be solemn; I sympathize deeply in the joy of these dear friends, and would almost wish I were about to make my first profession with them."

One of these friends was a sea-captain, and we shall, without asking his permission, give his interesting narrative, which was then heard by very few, as his examination was late in the evening.

"I was born of pious parents; went to sea when I was thirteen years old, and followed the sea until four years ago. I was a ship-master at twenty. Whenever I met Christians I had a desire, as I looked upon them, to be a Christian myself, and have often resolved and tried, but without any effect. I was so attached to the world, was so prosperous, and had so much around me, that it seemed as if I never could break away; until this last year, in consequence of business embarrassments through the commercial crisis, I lost the confidence which had always clung to me, and felt my moral strength giving way. I *began to long* for a more enduring and satisfying por-

tion, and my feelings worked within me till my heart was so full I did not know when I came home at night which way to turn. For some three or four days and nights I did not sleep at all; then I came here one evening to the lecture with a heavy heart. I was very uneasy in the lecture till you began to open up the love and mercy of Christ, and then it seemed to me that was just what I wanted. My thoughts worked and worked within me till at last I felt there was nothing on earth I would not give up for such love as that; and I did give all up. I came in with my heart filled and loaded with sin, but while listening to you, sir, I became conscious of that acceptance of Christ that emptied itself all on him. I could not describe my feelings; it seemed as if every one was looking heavenward. I looked all around, and everywhere saw this love of Christ. When I got out into the open air, my spirits were so exhilarated that I wanted to run, and I believe if the streets had been free from encumbrances I should have run clear home. I wanted to get into my chair, and give myself up to my feelings. Every thing seemed so new and strange that I did not know what to make of it. All I knew was, that I was 'all right.' I began to say to myself, 'Perhaps after all this is merely excitement;' and I began to test my mind by common-place subjects, and I found my intellect and memory as strong and clear as ever. I told my wife how I felt, and she said she thought I had better pray; but I thought to myself,

'There is no need of praying, I am all right any way.' I called my family together in the morning, had prayers, and then went to business, but all the while I longed to be by myself, so I went out several times and took a walk, and if ever I have made a good prayer it has been going along the street. The love of Christ came more and more plainly to me, and I began to understand the great change which had come over me. I feel sometimes now as if I were in danger of falling away, and have a great dread of it. Nothing gives me so much peace as looking back to that precious moment when Christ first came to me; that gives me comfort, and I can always look back to it and find help and strength."

A gentleman: "I have always felt the importance of religion, particularly during the last two years, but did not have any personal interest until two months ago. I was restless one night, which is not my habit, and my thoughts turned upon religious matters, chiefly on my own weakness and sinfulness. Finally, I attempted to pray, which I had not done for two or three years. I continued to pray morning and evening for two or three weeks, and had a good deal of feeling, but still did not make up my mind. I remained in that state till two weeks ago last Sunday, when you preached a sermon from the text—"God so loved the world." It affected me very much, and that night I began to seek Christ. I was unhappy for a week or two still. Last Friday evening

came to prayer-meeting, and when you called on rsons to rise I wanted to, but my pride kept me ck. You delayed a moment, and asked again, and en I was enabled to rise. From that moment I felt ppy. The Sunday following was the very happiest y of my life. I love Christ, and am determined to rve him to the best of my ability as long as I live."

By a gentleman: "I have altogether a different eling toward Christ from what I used to have. I ve given myself to him, and that means something w. I accept his will as supreme in me by God's lp. I have only begun to enjoy Christian feelings d worship. I never knew how sweet they were be- re. If I know any thing of myself, I think I can y that I have the witness within. I find it difficult express myself. It seemed to me as if, at the time my conversion, for the first time in my life I felt e goodness and mercy of God, and I accepted him once; this feeling increases. It is a great pleasure me to cast in my lot with you here."

By a gentleman: "I have supposed myself to be a ristian within the last three weeks. Since the ght of hope has come upon me, it has been steadily creasing. My rising to-night in the prayer-meeting s seemed to relieve me of a great burden. I am t now ashamed of Christ. It seems to me that rist will sustain me to the end. In all my walks life, the first thing that comes up in my mind is a *mn*, not *a song*, as it used to be. I never attended

worship regularly since I was ten years old. I was educated a Roman Catholic."

Mrs. Stowe, in seeking admission to this church, stated as her reason for so doing, that she had long been dissatisfied with the position of most of the American churches as regards many of the prominent public questions of the day. This church came the nearest to her idea of what a church ought to be, namely, a witness for Christ—against all manner of evils, public, social, or private. Moreover, she had always been refreshed by her periods of communion with us, and always anticipated a visit here as a season of spiritual enjoyment and strengthening, and it was now her wish that where her affections were her name should be also.

These are a few examples gathered from the many.

The candidates seeking admission among us were, as we have before said, of all shades of religious belief. Naturally, therefore, there were some differences of opinion or of feeling on minor points. We believe there were none in regard to the truths embodied in our simple confession of faith, but merely on the question of ordinances, and especially the ordinance of baptism. Some had been baptized in their infancy, and were satisfied that this baptism was valid; while others could not recognize it with any satisfaction, inasmuch as it was not their own act, and many had never been baptized at all. Conscientious scruples were regarded in every case, without either objection

discussion. Those who had not been baptized ere at liberty to choose the mode of baptism which ey judged most Scriptural, and not a few chose to ceive baptism by immersion.

Mr. Beecher's views as to the external part of the dinance are, that water applied in the name of the inity is baptism, and that it is immaterial whether e mode be sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. On e other hand, he holds that each one has the right decide such points as these for himself, and that to m who thinks conscientiously that one form is bet- than the other, to him it is better. His liberality this matter has given much offense, both to Pedo d Anabaptists; the one party has been irritated at he should baptize at all by sprinkling, the other at he should baptize by immersion. His attempts explanation have seemed only to augment the dif- ulty, and we hope and believe that he will follow e liberal course he has begun, heedless of opinions either side. We know that it has been a great y to many to have this freedom, and that without their Christian liberty would have been infringed, d their happiness marred. Some excellent people, en among ourselves, have questioned whether Mr. ecber was not yielding to a mere fancy, rather than noring a religious scruple; but we are persuaded the contrary, and have no hesitation in saying that, ght or wrong, there is an increasing tendency among ristians *at large* to believe in the baptism of believ-

ers, and by immersion, as the Scriptural fulfillment of the Saviour's command. The Baptist Church in Pierrepont-street was kindly lent for the baptismal occasion, and the service was very impressively performed by Mr. Beecher, on the Thursday evening preceding the May communion. The scene was one of some excitement, owing to the extremely crowded state of the place; but we doubt whether any one possessed of much feeling could look on and be unimpressed by the beauty and significance of this symbol. Mr. Beecher had administered the ordinance in that same place a few days previous to the January communion; and there was one young lady, among the present number, who dated her decision for God from that occasion, when some friends of hers thus publicly professed their faith in Christ, and were "buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so they also should walk in newness of life."

On the first Sabbath in May these persons, one hundred and ninety in number, were received into the communion of the church, and made a public profession of their faith.

It was a season of intense and holy joy, long to be remembered. All the previous week, the coming Sabbath was uppermost in our minds; the first thought on waking, the last before closing the eyes at night; and mutual greetings and gratulations were exchanged *by the candidates* and their friends in anticipation of

the happy festival. At last the morning dawned, and it was almost with feelings of thankfulness that, on looking out of our windows, we saw rain. It was a damp morning, and to this circumstance, we believe, we are indebted for a portion of our comfort on that memorable day. The news of the large accession had spread, and our church would have been uncomfortably thronged had the weather been very fine. As it was, they began to assemble about the door at nine o'clock, in the hope of obtaining seats. The five front rows of pews were reserved for the candidates, and were completely filled, and not an inch of available space through the house was left unoccupied. It was truly a beautiful sight that met our eye as we took our wonted place that morning. A pleasant surprise had been reserved for us in the elegant decoration of the platform and desk with flowers; many of the candidates started with joyful emotion as, taking their seats, they were greeted by these sweet and fragrant messengers, seeming to bid them a glad welcome to the earthly sanctuary, and also pointing forward to that *abundant* entrance which shall be ministered unto all them that overcome into their Father's kingdom above. It was meet that it should be so. Two vases of flowers, on white pedestals, were placed one on each extremity of the platform, two were also on the pastor's desk, and one on the edge of the platform at his feet. Underneath the choir, behind him, was this appropriate inscription, in large letters "Ye

were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." There they sat, husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, united that day to each other in closer and more enduring bonds than they had ever known before. There sat the little girl, so quiet and calm in her exterior, that none around guessed the deep joy which was throbbing in her little heart, and just behind her the gray-headed disciple, who had been thirty years in the campaign, yet rejoiced to make a fresh dedication of himself by uniting in fellowship with us; there was the son, who had been pursued over sea and land by the prayers of a sainted mother, brought back from his wanderings, and consecrating the strength of his manhood to the service of Christ; there sat, side by side, the profligate reclaimed, the backslider restored, the moralist elevated into the dignity of a son of God; there was the daughter, the first-fruits of a large family gathered in, the reward of a mother's faith and prayer; there was the sole remaining unconverted member of the Bible-class, given at last to the prayers and tears of her faithful teacher; there were two entire classes from the Sabbath-school, two full sheaves laid that day before the Lord of the harvest, the pledge and earnest of the many to come after them. It was the feast of the first-fruits, to be followed yet, as we believe, by the day of Pentecost. Did we say two *entire classes?* We were mistaken; there was *one* left

out of each. One solitary ear of corn, but not forgotten or uncared for, and even now, while we are writing, we can almost see the golden tint deepening upon it as it stands in the full glowing beams of the Sun of righteousness. The gleaner shall gather it ere long, and it shall be safely housed in the garner of the Lord. But like all earthly joy, even the purest, this joy had its shadows; the parent's heart overflowing with gratitude for one child safe, yearned over the others left behind; the young wife, in the midst of her own joy, wept that she must that day stand without her husband; and the husband mourned, because the wife of his bosom was absent from his side; the son felt lonely, even in the midst of his brethren, because he alone of his father's house had turned his back on the "City of Destruction;" the sisters, clinging closely to one another, thought of the beloved father at home, and there went up a cry into the ears of the Lord of hosts—"The remnant! the remnant! What shall be done this day for the remnant?" Still the prevailing feeling was joy—"The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad;" and even solicitude for others did not mar our happiness, it only *mellowed* it.

Before the profession of faith was made, we sang the former part of the hymn, and we will quote it in full:

O happy day that fixed my choice
On thee, my Saviour and my God:

Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.

O happy bond that seals my vows
To him who merits all my love;
Let cheerful anthems fill the house,
While to his altar now I move.

When the candidates had made their profession, and their reception on the part of the other members of the church had been signified by their rising in their places, we took up the remaining verses:

'Tis done—the great transaction's done,
I am my Lord's and he is mine,
He drew me, and I followed on,
Charmed to confess the voice divine.

Now rest, my long divided heart,
Fixed on this blissful center, rest;
Here have I found a nobler part,
Here heavenly pleasures fill my breast.

High heaven that hears the solemn vow,
That vow renewed shall daily hear,
Till in life's latest hour I bow,
And bless in death a bond so dear.

It seemed as if Doddridge had composed this hymn purposely for our use, and we doubt whether any thing more appropriate could have been written. The peculiar fitness of dividing it, as we have described, struck every thoughtful mind, and greatly enhanced *our pleasure* in singing it. The sermon preached on

this occasion has already been published; we shall, therefore, say nothing about it. At the close of the service, near two thousand remained to partake of the Lord's Supper, the body of the house being densely filled.

Mr. Beecher always extends a liberal invitation to all those who love the Lord Jesus, in sincerity and truth, to partake with us; and, in so doing, gives emphasis to the truth that it is the LORD'S table, and not the table of the church, and it is for the Lord to give the invitation and choose the guests. The invitation was largely accepted that morning, and members of other churches, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Baptists, forgot their differences, and we sat down one family in our Father's "banqueting house, with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to our taste." "For lo! the winter was past, the rain was over and gone, the flowers did appear on the earth, and the time of the singing of birds was come." "Never before," said Mr. Beecher, "did we come together such a company to commemorate the Lord's death—never before did so many call me pastor. I am unspeakably rich to-day!" Surely the angels might love to look upon that scene, and could our eyes have been opened, like the prophet's servant of old, who shall say that we should not have seen what he saw?

When we came out of church the sky was unclouded, the rain was literally "over and gone," *heaven and earth* seemed to smile as if in response to

our feelings. And so passed away this blessed Sabbath morning. Shall we quote the closing words of Mr. Beecher's sermon, in case some who may read this little narrative should not already have seen them?

"If ever, in after times, you are carried into temptations—if ever you are waylaid by secret enemies in your own heart—if ever you are driven hither and thither from your steadfastness—wherever you may be in the dark hour—I bid you remember this bright and radiant morning, and this joyful consecration which you this day have made; and if, in that hour of darkness, there is nothing in the present to sustain you, draw from the magazine of the past, and let memory nerve you to stand steadfast and faithful to the end! And when we shall have passed what most men call the river, but what has become by faith the rill of death, scarcely wetting the soles of our feet while we walk across, singing triumphs all the way over—if you go before I do, greet me; if I go before, I shall look back for you, and reach out joyful hands from among that multitude that shall stand to greet you when you come to your Father's kingdom. By-and-by we shall be with the ransomed of the Lord; and there, crowned with eternal joy, we shall lift up our voices, forever and ever, in praise of Him who hath loved us and given Himself for us. Amen! *and Amen!*"

At the close of the evening service and of the

prayer-meeting the next morning, Mr. Beecher distributed the flowers among those for whose especial welcome they had been provided; they were eagerly received, and we believe they will be carefully cherished as precious mementoes of a precious season.

Referring to the flowers that Monday morning, Mr. Beecher said—"Some day there will be a little girl playing in the garden, while an old lady sits at the door, and by-and-by the child will run to her and say—'Grandmamma, what is this little parcel which I have found in your drawer?' 'Well, dear, run and fetch my spectacles, and I will see.' The paper is unfolded, and there are some dried, faded flowers. 'Why, my child, these are the flowers which were given to me when I joined the church sixty years ago.' Do you think this is fancy? I tell you it is sober fact, and the grandmother is sitting before us in the person of that little girl."

"Oh," said the little girl to us that same morning, "I am *so* sorry yesterday is over; I shall never have another such a happy day as long as I live. I sat in my room after every body else was asleep to make it last as long as I could, but when twelve o'clock struck I could not hold up any longer, so I went to bed and cried myself to sleep."

We have so far confined our narrative to the week-meetings, and said little or nothing of the Sabbath services, with the exception of the first Sabbath in *May*. *We will* now cast a retrospective glance at

them, and though we cannot attempt any thing like a full report, we will endeavor to give some faint outline.

Our congregation, on Sabbath mornings, consists almost entirely of our own people, while in the evening there is a great influx of strangers. The sermons are, therefore, very generally adapted to this state of things. The morning teachings we account especially our own. We will mention a few of these, to which we listened, as did many others, with much interest and profit. Our reference to them will be worthless except to those who heard them—to such, the mere citing of the subject may serve to bring up fragments to their memory, and to recall the circumstances accompanying their utterance.

JOHN xiv. 21–23. The object of this sermon was to meet the difficulties of those who were asking how they were to look for a manifestation of Christ to themselves. It is in the way of obedience to the commands of Christ, and in that way alone that we are to expect a manifestation of him in our souls. He *cannot* manifest himself to us, but in proportion as we grow into his likeness, and in the very measure that we conform our lives and dispositions to his will, shall we have, both in our secret experiences and in our ordinary employments, manifestations of Christ made to us.

HEB. iv. 12, to end. The subject was the omniscience of Christ, and the comfort to be derived from

that fact. It may seem startling at first sight that the apostle should have grounded such an exhortation as is contained in the latter part of this passage upon such a statement as is made in the former. "The word of God" (Christ), says Paul, "is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit—neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." And from these premises he proceeds to draw the inference that we should, "therefore—for that very reason—come boldly unto the Throne of Grace to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Strange it may seem, truly, yet a moment's thought will show that on no other foundation could such an exhortation have been so well built. From the very fact that the Lord Jesus knew us so thoroughly before he undertook our case, we derive the strongest encouragement to believe that he will never weary of us. We make discoveries of our own sinfulness that surprise us, but they never surprise Him. Moreover, this thorough knowledge on the part of Christ is an unspeakable comfort to his people. The great hindrance to earthly sympathy is that no man can have a thorough knowledge of another's heart; he mistakes motives, misunderstands feelings, underrates the good, overrates the evil, and even where his intentions *are the best, through* his imperfect knowledge, he

often only hurts where he would fain heal. Not so the Lord Christ. He makes no mistakes; and exactly in proportion to the perfection of his knowledge is the perfection of his sympathy.

"Christ weeping over Jerusalem" was a sermon many cannot fail to remember. It deserves a better notice than we can give it. The tenderness and tearfulness of God was the idea brought out. God was manifest in Christ—the immutable, yet ever-melting God. God weeping over a sinning world. Not that we suppose God actually to shed tears, but he knows the feeling of which tears are but the outward expression.

The evening sermons were addressed very generally to the unconverted, the hesitating, or the inquiring. Mr. Beecher was very earnest in these labors; his appeals and entreaties seemed to have a peculiar force, and it was as if God did beseech them through him, saying—"Be ye reconciled unto me." The congregations were overflowing every Sabbath evening, and it was a grief to us that so many were compelled to go away. Groups of young men stood round every entrance where it was possible to catch a sound, and we have never witnessed greater seriousness of manner or more steady attention. It became no uncommon thing to see handkerchiefs in use, and that not by women only; often have we watched the tear rolling down the cheek of a manly face near us, and *seen it hastily* brushed away, but only to make room

for another. It seemed as if, after a time, we had got over the old shame connected with tears, and we submitted with resignation to what it was impossible to avoid. At the close of one of these sermons, when he had been pleading with the undecided for a full and immediate surrender of themselves to God, he concluded with a prayer of consecration, in which he begged all those whose hearts had been touched by the word to join him. It was a beautiful and comprehensive prayer, a sweet form of consecration to the Lord Jesus, the very recollection of which must awaken tender thoughts in the minds of those whose hearts adopted it that night for their own. We know that some did adopt it, that to some it was the first step they took toward the bosom of their Father, but only he who searches the heart knows how many more allowed themselves to be borne by it, as Elijah in the chariot of fire, to the gate of heaven. Blessed are they that can look back, and say—"Thou, Lord, hast seen!"

It was very close upon that Sabbath evening, if not the very next, that Mr. Beecher introduced into the church the practice which had already been so useful in the lecture-room—namely, the signifying publicly a wish to be prayed for. He had been preaching with great fervor, and it seemed as if his pleading had made an impression. On closing his sermon, he paused a moment, and then said, in a clear, calm voice—"*I have been* requested several times to give

an opportunity, on the Sabbath evening, to those who might desire prayer on their own behalf, to express their wish. I know not why, but I have never before felt moved to do so; but to-night I am very bold—yet do not suppose that I shall be in the least discomposed should not a single individual accept the invitation. Are there any in our midst who desire to ask our prayers? Let them signify it by rising in their places." A solemn silence reigned in the dense assembly—a moment's pause ensued—we looked on almost breathless, and then they began to rise.

Slowly the courage returned to the trembling hearts, and they rose, one after another, in all parts of the house; on the right hand and on the left, in the circles and in the galleries, men of various ages, and women, yes, timid, shrinking women, rose. Each one was acknowledged by the pastor as fast as his eye caught the movement. Three minutes, perchance, the silent process lasted, and then we bowed our heads in prayer. And what a prayer followed! only God remembers now; but he does remember. This continued every Sabbath evening for about two months.

We ourselves, while writing, can hardly realize that our eyes have beheld such scenes; it seems like a grand and beautiful dream. We never expected to see the things we have seen, and to hear the things *we* have heard, but now having been witnesses of the *power and* grace of God, we thank him for the past,

but we are filled with still greater desires for the future.

Those who attended these Sabbath evening services may remember the sermons preached from these texts: "How long halt ye between two opinions? Choose ye this day whom ye will serve;" "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God;" "We will not have this man to reign over us," and others. We think that the most thrilling of these sermons, however, was the one on "The Prodigal Son." We have often heard it preached from, but never before did it seem so life-like. The effect on the audience was visible; they seemed moved almost as one man; every eye was riveted on the speaker, and we were only sorry when the sermon, long as it had been, closed. It seemed as though we could sit all night listening to such an exhibition of the love of God. Many rose for prayer that night, and when the impressive service was over, our pastor's aged father rose to say a word ere the audience dispersed. We could not catch the sentence, for his voice has lost the clearness and power it once had; but when he sat down, we heard the voice of his son. "My venerable father," he said, "has spent his whole life in urging sinners to come to Christ, and I verily believe that when he shall have one foot within the gate of heaven, he will turn round to give a last warning before he enters."

The work was not over. On the same Sabbath of which *we have* been speaking (the first Sabbath in

May), the announcement was made that the examining committee would wait as usual for applications from persons desiring to enter into fellowship with the church, and that the meetings would be continued as before; "for," it was added, "the harvest is by no means gathered in; we have only begun."

Notice was also given that there would be an extra communion Sabbath interjected between our ordinary seasons, which are every second month, so that those who desired to unite with us would have the opportunity of doing so on the first Sabbath in June.

There was no diminution of interest in any respect; the morning and evening meetings were just as full as ever, and the number of persons desiring religious conversation as great. Mr. Beecher worked on steadily and unweariedly, every day bringing fresh duties and cares, fresh demands upon his energy. "I cannot afford to indulge in all the joy I feel," said he; "for I know that were I to do it, I should be worn out in a week. I must save my strength for *work*."

We have not spoken, in the brief sketch so far given, of all the extra demands upon his time. From the very first manifestation of this remarkable religious interest, he devoted two evenings in each week to meeting with the young men of his church and congregation. The primary object of this meeting was to take counsel together as to the best modes of laboring, now that the whitening fields presented *so inviting an* aspect. Each one was at liberty to

state his own plans, difficulties, or successes; to ask advice from the pastor, or relate any incident that had come under his notice. These were, as we were told, extremely interesting meetings, and after a while Mr. Beecher extended the invitation on the Sabbath to as many of the young men as were able or willing to avail themselves of it. He styled it "an informal prayer-meeting," adding, "that it was a great deal better than 'a formal one.'" We believe that it lapsed into a free conversational meeting, where any topic could be discussed, and the opinion of the pastor asked by any one who wished it. Owing to the press of engagements, these meetings were discontinued in the month of May, and only resumed for a few times previous to the pastor's absence for his summer vacation. Of these meetings we cannot speak further, as they lay out of our province.

The Wednesday evening lecture became so crowded that it was impossible for the lecture-room to contain the audience, and hundreds were each time obliged to go away unable to obtain entrance. Mr. Beecher was unwilling to consent to the arrangement, but seeing the absolute urgency of the case he conceded the point, and for some time the lecture was given in the church. The attendance was very large, not filling the house completely, but occupying by far the greater part of it. Mr. Beecher did not enjoy it so well, because he felt obliged, in some degree, to lay aside the familiar colloquial style in which he loves to talk to

his people in the week meetings. Nevertheless, those Wednesday evening discourses were among the most effectual and most God-honored of his public labors. One of these, in which he took for his subject the parable of the grain of mustard-seed, and in which he styled the beginnings of Christian life and experiences, the seed-form, was eminently useful. It was spoken of by not a few, in giving in their statements of experience, as having greatly assisted them, and removed many of their difficulties. The main idea of the lecture was that Christian life might begin on the lowest scale, and in the smallest form, and that this ought to be no ground of discouragement, if it only increased. The work of Christ within us is progressive, and that progress is to be had chiefly, if not entirely, through discipline. "People say to me, 'You seem to pray as if Christ were close by, and you spoke just into his ear. You seem to have heaven so near you, 'tis as if you had been there. How shall I get that happy experience?' I will tell you. Go home and turn that cradle upside down. I know something of this. Five times I have given back to God the most precious gifts he ever bestowed on me. You want the joyful experience. Are you willing to take the lesson? To me it came in the loss of children—to you it may come in bankruptcy, sickness, or otherwise. Will you receive the chastening in whatever form it comes? Will you discern Christ in every *trying dispensation*? Can you say, 'Lord, I under-

stand it. You can't wear so thick a vail that I shan't know you. Hew away; though Thou *slay* me, yet will I trust in Thee.' Young Christians, do not always receive this truth concerning God's mode of education at the first; they are apt to run round the cross or jump over it." The closing words were somewhat as follows, and from their very simplicity they fastened themselves on our memory: "Be patient; you think the way long, but it is much shorter than you suppose. Some of you will lay your cares in Greenwood *very soon.* You will follow me to the grave, or I shall follow you. We shall get glimpses of heaven in your dying experience, or you will get a glance at the streets of the holy city when the gate is thrown open for me. Take courage; we shall soon be together with the Lord."

Another very useful lecture, at this same period, was from this passage—"He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."

It was Mr. Beecher's aim to make these lectures answer the purpose of special instruction to those who were inquiring of him what they must do to be saved, and also seeking an answer to this second query, so constantly and so anxiously raised by the newly-made disciple—"How shall I know when I am saved?"

Some entered upon this new life with experiences so joyful and striking that they entertained no doubt as to *the reality* of the change which had come over

them; while others crept timidly into the kingdom, and not venturing to lift up their eyes to behold the Sun of righteousness, lest they should be dazzled by his splendors, they scarce could persuade themselves they were in at all; then, comparing their glimmering twilight with the bright light of which their more hopeful brethren spoke, they became discouraged, and the very things which should have comforted and strengthened them served only to cast them down the more. It was to meet these cases, and remove these fears, that Mr. Beecher especially sought in this discourse. He showed in how many different ways men may come, and always did come to Christ, yet all were received. Christ never prescribed the exact mode in which we were to come, but simply that we should come in some way. Some are by their very nature fearful and conscientious in the extreme, and others are, on the contrary, of a hopeful and even sanguine temperament, and naturally these differences affect the religious as they do the secular life. Now if, in the all-important decision as to whether we love Christ or not, the same discrimination were used which we are wont to apply to more ordinary topics, there would not certainly be half the disquietude and unhappiness which persons are apt to suffer while endeavoring to apply this test to their experience. Some have glowing and rapturous feelings, which lift them up in ecstasies of joy and love; others never knew such emotions, yet are per-

fectly conscious of a quiet, steady desire springing up within them to consecrate their lives—others, again, cannot give any definite form to their feelings; some change has taken place, they can scarcely tell when or how; but, whereas, once they seldom thought of the Saviour, now he is continually present to their minds; they cannot explain it, but they find themselves revolving around a new center, yet they would shrink from the assumption that they *love* Christ—they are conscious of no such feeling. Now to all these, and the many other grades of experience, there is one test which the Saviour himself applied, and which remains unaltered and unalterable to this day—"He that hath my commandments and *keepeth* them, he it is that loveth me." Not feeling, but *doing* the will of God is the criterion. And this is perfectly in accordance with recognized principles of every day life. Not the child that is always hanging round the mother's neck gives the strongest proof of affection, but the child that obeys the mother's commands. Then as to the mode of manifesting this love, Christ accepts the smallest service, however worthless in itself if only done for his sake. Even the giving of a cup of cold water, for the Master's sake, shall in nowise lose its reward. He will accept it as done unto Himself. It is, too, a notable fact that those who set out on their heavenward journey, with the faintest beginnings in the way of evidences, are very frequently *the ones who* make the most solid attainments, and

grow into the most vigorous Christians. Let none be discouraged by the smallness of their beginnings; it is not how you *begin*, but how you *end* that is the all-important matter. Of course, we do not mean to provide excuses for carelessness in the beginning; there is but one way—one gate by which to enter—only one foundation upon which we can build, yet there may be endless varieties in the building. Christian life is progress. The light of the just shineth *more and more* unto the perfect day.

We have not attempted to give more than an outline of the ideas, not aiming at the words in which they were expressed, for we write entirely from memory.

We are forcibly reminded, while dwelling on these various shades of Christian character, of good old John Bunyan and his pilgrims. We will give here the words which he puts into the mouth of Mr. Feeblemind, whose fears had caused him to shrink from joining the church, and who, we suppose, trembled like an aspen-leaf when before the examining committee; also, the answer returned by Mr. Greatheart:

"Now Mr. Feeblemind, when they were going out of the door, made as if he intended to linger. The which, when Mr. Greatheart espied, he said, 'Come, Mr. Feeblemind, pray do you go along with us; I will be your conductor, and you shall fare as the rest.'

"*Feeblemind.* Alas! I want a suitable companion.

You are all lusty and strong, but I, as you see, am weak. I choose, therefore, rather to come behind, lest by reason of my many infirmities I should be both a burden to myself and to you. I am, as I said, a man of weak and feeble mind, and shall be offended and made weak at that which others can bear. I shall like no laughing; I shall like no gay attire; I shall like no unprofitable questions. Nay, I am so weak a man as to be offended at that which others have a liberty to do. I do not yet know all the truth; I am a very ignorant Christian man. Sometimes, if I hear some rejoice in the Lord, it troubles me, because I cannot do so too. It is with me as it is with a weak man among the strong, or as with a sick man among the healthy, or as a lamp despised; so that I know not what to do. 'He that is ready to slip with his feet is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.'

"'But, brother,' said Mr. Greatheart, 'I have it in commission to comfort the feeble-minded, and to support the weak. You *must needs* go along with us; we will wait for you; we will lend you our help; we will deny ourselves of some things both opinionative and practical, for your sake; we will not enter into doubtful disputations before you; we will be made all things to you rather than you shall be left behind.'"

So Mr. Feeblemind went. Shall we see him to the end of his journey?

"After *this*, Mr. Feeblemind had tidings brought,

him that the post sounded his horn at his chamber-door. Then he came in and told him, saying, 'I am come to tell thee that thy Master hath need of thee, and that in a very little thou must behold his face in brightness. And take this as a token of the truth of my message: Those that look out at the windows shall be darkened.'

"Then Mr. Feeblemind called for his friends, and told them what errand had been brought unto him, and what token he had received of the truth of the message. 'Then,' he said, 'since I have nothing to bequeath to any, to what purpose should I make a will? As for my feeble mind, that I will leave behind me; for that I shall have no need of in the place whither I go, nor is it worth bestowing upon the poorest pilgrims. Wherefore, when I am gone, I desire that you, Mr. Valiant, would bury it in a dunghill.' This done, and the day being come on which he was to depart, he entered the river as the rest. His last words were, 'Hold out, faith and patience!' So he went over to the other side."

Pardon this digression, reader. We would not have quoted Bunyan in full had we been assured you were as well acquainted with him as we think it would be for your interest to be, or had we been sure that you had each a copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress" on your shelves, and would take the trouble to reach it down and refer.

Another very useful lecture during this series was

one which, instead of being founded, as is the usual plan, upon a text of Scripture, was delivered as a kind of reply to a letter from a gentleman in Washington, who sought assistance in and relief from spiritual difficulties of long accumulation. We were not present on the occasion, and have heard no details of this lecture, but know that it commended itself to many; and remember that some who came before the examining committee shortly after, stated that they had received much help from it. We remember, too, that Mr. Beecher spoke of his own dissatisfaction with that evening's performance. "I said to myself, when coming off the platform at the close of that service, 'Now you have thrown away an evening.'" God, however, said otherwise.

The sittings of the examining committee continued as interesting as ever, nor did the number of applicants diminish. Some of these experiences are so deeply interesting that we feel irresistibly impelled to give them. If the speakers should be disposed to blame us for so doing, we hope they will take a second thought on the matter, and consider that, perchance, these few words of theirs may touch some heart that they never could have reached by any direct means; and if the honor of Christ shall be in any measure promoted in this manner, can they do otherwise than rejoice that they were permitted to contribute to so blessed a result? We remember hearing a *lady*, who was among this very same com-

pany, say, that she felt at times as if she wanted to go from door to door to tell of the great things the Lord had done for her. We presume, therefore, that she would not object to have her testimony made known.

The most valuable portions of the Scriptures are not, as we think, the doctrinal, valuable though they be. How inestimable are the narrative portions—the conversion of Paul, the restoration of Peter, the awakening of the jailor, the enlightening of the eunuch, the opening of the heart of Lydia, the consistent life of Dorcas, the useful labors of Priscilla and Aquila. Where would be the beauty and the power of the New Testament were these sweet stories away? Paul was an able steward of the mysteries of God, and could speak well and wisely, but it was his life, "known and read of all men," that was the most effective weapon he used. Did you ever consider what it was that convicted the Philippian jailor, and made him cry—"What must I do to be saved?" Who had told him of danger—had he listened to any striking sermon on the terrors of future punishment? We do not believe he had. What, then, caused his sudden alarm? Simply this: that the two prisoners he had left for the night with bleeding backs and feet, made fast in the stocks, had awoke him by singing praises to God; and so, while Felix trembled under Paul's reasoning about the judgment to come, but *said*—"*Go thy* way for this time;" the jailor con-

victed by the singing of a hymn, believed, and was saved. And now we shall make no further apology for what follows:

"When this religious interest broke out, I felt a wish to be in sympathy with it. I had never sympathized in any such movement before, but it seemed to me that there was less machinery in this, and its simplicity and quietness commended it to me. About six weeks ago I went to the Fulton-street prayer-meeting, but did not enjoy it, and thought I would not go again. I did go, however, both there and elsewhere. I came here to church one Sunday morning, and heard a sermon from "God so loved the world." I obtained a new view of the love of God; my heart warmed within me while listening, and I almost felt as if I loved God. On considering the point, however, afterward, I found that the love of God was not in me. The evening sermon was on "the Prodigal Son." I cannot say that my feelings were so deeply moved then as in the morning. I resolved to go to the early prayer-meeting next day, but was prevented, and felt disappointed. I began to analyze my feelings to see why this was, as I had never been at one of these meetings. After that I attended prayer-meetings, sometimes as many as four in a day. I read the Bible and prayed alone, and at last called on the pastor. My talk with him was not very satisfactory. I thought he did not understand my case; but I *soon discovered that* I knew very little about my-

self, and learned to distrust my feelings. I wanted some realization of God, and could not find any. A Baptist minister came in to see me, and I told him my difficulty—that I could not find any one to pray to—my prayers did not seem to reach anywhere. I had hitherto looked upon Christ as less than God, but the minister pointed me to some texts on this head; among others, to this one: "I am the way," &c. I pondered over that verse, and accepted it just according to the literal rendering of the words—namely, that Christ is the only way to the Father; so after that I began to pray to Christ. For a week I seemed to get darker and darker; then three weeks ago I came here to the lecture. The subject was, "on receiving the kingdom of God as a little child." I did not fully comprehend it, simple though it was, yet I got some light, prayed with more freedom and comfort than ever before, and had some peace and joy. The next afternoon, however, my dark feelings came back, and I was almost in despair. It was rainy and dull, and the weather harmonized with my state. I told my brother-in-law of my feelings, and he read the fourteenth chapter of John, and prayed with me. That evening I heard a lecture to inquirers at the Bergen-street Church; it was on "faith," from the text, "Be not afraid, only believe." I followed the speaker as for my life. I wanted to be alone, and almost ran home. I went to my chamber, and kneeling down to pray, I felt relieved at once. I had faith,

and felt that my sins were pardoned, and I was saved through Christ. I had great peace and joy, and longed to tell my friends what the Lord had done for me. The whole scheme of Christianity seems different to me now. I feel myself to be a transformed man. I have love in my heart toward every person who is a Christian."

By another: "My father is a minister, but I have been like many ministers' sons, entirely neglectful of my duty most of my life. I never made a profession of religion or had any particular hope, except for a short time when young. That came to nothing, either because the ground was not well prepared, or else not cared for afterward. It is now about four weeks since I received the special manifestation which determined me. I had the stroke in a different way from any I have witnessed, and could not help paying attention to it. Since that period I have proceeded onward in one steady course—sometimes in water, sometimes on dry land, but still struggling on—and at least once a day coming round, and taking a fresh start. I have sought the help of God that I might lead a Christian life. I believe I have taken the initiative, and traveled some little way on the road. I think I shall find it much easier through my connection with the visible church. I find something in prayer and in reading the Scriptures that I never dreamed of before. I used to pray before, but it was like *talking under* the influence of nightmare when

the voice cannot come out. The contemplation of the character of Christ is one of the sweetest subjects of thought to me. The day I felt this change was the very happiest of my life. I cannot explain it, but I had such a sense of serenity and joy as I had never conceived of; it was three weeks ago yesterday. I am a book-keeper, and the change I allude to came over me while about my business. I had attended several of the meetings here for some weeks previous, especially the Wednesday lecture. I now see that I was all this time operated upon by an unseen power opening the dried-up springs of my heart. One day some one at a prayer-meeting repeated a verse of Scripture, which impressed me very much. I said to myself, 'That is exactly what I need, and perhaps now is just the time for me to take it up and follow it.' I left the meeting in an uncertain frame of mind, which lasted two weeks, during which time I was giving more and more attention to the subject. At last one morning, while I was sitting at my desk, not having had one thought upon religious subjects that I can remember, suddenly four or five words were spoken in my ear—'He will have mercy.' I heard them as plainly as when I repeat them now. It startled me, and I looked round to see what it was; but I soon thought what it was, and went on writing, when it was repeated. The whole of the text was uttered this time, and several other verses, and as *the passages* increased in length so did the voice in

strength, and presently it seemed as if a huge bell was ringing them in my head. I stopped writing, and went upstairs to think over that passage which had been driven into me—'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.' I never saw the meaning of that before, but now it was all clear to me; I took the text, and applied it to myself just as I was, and I was at peace in a moment. I established the family altar that same day, and it is now the evening star which attracts me when I go home."

There were many other recitals worthy of note, but we will only mention some of the specialties, selected from the whole number of examinations between the May and June communions.

Two individuals dated their conversion from the last communion; they were deeply moved by hearing the long list of names read, and witnessing the impressive yet joyous solemnity.

A little boy said his heart was touched by Mr. Beecher's remark that there were apples in the gallery, that would shake down before the next sacramental season; he was up there himself as a spectator.

Six individuals (of one family) came, four at once, and the two others immediately afterward. The elder brother *declared that* he had for years had impres-

sions and feelings with regard to religion, but they had grown cold, and had been only recently revived by conversations with one of his sisters. The older sister, on the other hand, testified that she had been won to Christ by the example of this same brother, whose life had always seemed to her to be patterned upon that of the Saviour; the mother had been a Christian for some years. They now longed most earnestly to be joined by their younger brother and his wife. They presented them for special remembrance at a little social prayer-meeting at which we were present, and the very next day we saw them both in the lecture-room seeking conversation with the pastor.

Several persons stated that they had been brought out by the sermon on the "Prodigal Son."

A lady, all her life an Episcopalian, had been moved to rise for prayer one Sunday evening, and dated her real Christian life from that hour. Any one well acquainted with the Episcopalian mode of worship, and the usual undemonstrative habits of persons long accustomed to it, will appreciate the amount of feeling which must have been at work before such a one could take the step we have described.

A young lady, of Quaker education, told how she had been brought here to church once by a friend with whom she had been disputing as to the relative merits of Lucretia Mott and Henry Ward Beecher, *and how after* that she could not stay away, but came

over from New York every Sabbath; how she had been deeply impressed, and finally had risen for prayer; and now, having hope through Jesus Christ, desired, as the greatest privilege she could possess in this world, to be received into the fellowship of his people.

One lady's case was particularly interesting. She had been for a long time past visited by thoughts of a serious nature, but never encouraged them; she thought there were so many difficulties in the way of her being a Christian; the greatest was that she did not think her husband would ever join her. During this period of awakening, however, he was converted, and his first aim was to bring his wife to the meetings which had become so precious to himself. She came, and he presented her for prayer. She soon shared in the interest he felt, and rose at three different times to be prayed for, each time receiving help. She continued to attend, and sometimes could hardly prevent herself from speaking out in the meeting, and telling them how much their prayers were doing for her. One morning shortly afterward she was alone, and busy washing her baby, when there came over her such a sudden and indescribable feeling of joy that she did not know how to contain herself. She hugged and kissed the baby, laughed, cried, and sang by turns to give vent to her happiness. All clouds were gone from her mind, and she was filled with joy and peace in be*lieving*. *Now* she and her husband were joined

in a new sense, and together consecrated themselves to the service of their common Saviour.

Another had been attending here five years on the Sabbath, had often been convicted of sin, but never came to a decision for Christ till two weeks before, when Mr. Beecher had compared the indefinite hopes so many are contented with, as to their eternal prospects, to a note without a date. She felt that it was high time she put a date to her determination, and did so that very night.

One young lady, when asked how long she had been a Christian, replied—"I never knew I was one at all till you, sir, told me so yesterday." "But," said Mr. Beecher, "do you think I was right?" "Yes," she said, "on going home I thought over what you had said, and found it was true."

A young man was aroused to serious thoughts on the importance of religion by the birth of his first child. The sense of his responsibility as a parent compelled him to seek the assistance and friendship of his own long-neglected heavenly Father; and so the little unconscious babe became the teacher, and, like the star that guided the wise men of old, never ceased to allure him on till he came to the place where Jesus was, and fell at his feet in adoration and love. Blessed little one! may the father see to it that he pays back, in thy prayerful and careful training, the debt of gratitude he owes thee.

A gentleman mentioned a recent providential

escape from a watery grave as the first thing which had impressed him with a sense of his obligations to God. He had been on the point of taking passage in the "Central America." The news of the fearful calamity struck him to the very heart, and he had no rest until he had consecrated to God the life he now felt he had received a second time at his hand.

And so, much time and space might be occupied in enumerating the many varieties of ways which this company of pilgrims had been led; not two of them had trodden precisely the same path, yet all had come to the same destination, and were henceforth to journey along the same road toward the same blessed home. They were received, one hundred and fifty-eight in all, with the same joy on the part of the church as were the brethren who had preceded them. Again were flowers in waiting to greet them, and hundreds of Christians looked on the beautiful spectacle with holy joy and loving sympathy.

There was no token of a decrease of interest in either the Sabbath or the week services, and Mr. Beecher began to speak seriously of omitting his usual summer vacation, and going on with his work through the entire season. He declared that, instead of being weary or exhausted, he gained strength every hour, and that he would not cease so long as there were any signs of harvest. This was finally overruled to the entire satisfaction of all his people, who felt that he needed rest and change.

Many were now leaving the city for their s
sojourn in the country, yet still the meeting
flag; they continued during the month of
spite of heat and many opposing circumstan
well sustained. They took, it is true, a s
different turn, but one no less important and
The topics discussed were more such as c
Christians in the after stages of their ex
states of feeling, habits, modes of usefulnes
and difficulties—these were freely talked ov
brethren, and the opinion of the pastor elic
variety of points, greater than we can menti

The remarks were always (as far as the
concerned) of a practical nature, and not ea
forgotten, particularly by those to whom t
specially applicable.

Mr. Beecher would occasionally read a lett
he judged would afford pleasure or profit to
ple. These letters have formed of themselv
delightful item in our spiritual feasts. On
evening he read a letter from an unknow
England to Mrs. Stowe, inclosing an earne
for prayer on behalf of her native land, t
would visit it in the same gracious way as
done this country, and requesting that thi
might be sent to some New York prayer
The letter was forwarded to Mr. Beecher,
request was faithfully complied with. Sur
heart responded to the prayer which went

night for Britain, and it is yet remembered in heaven; for though they who heard that prayer may never have thought of it since, yet not so is it with God —unlike us, He never forgets any thing save His people's transgressions.

Another very interesting communication was from a lady who was sailing that very day for Europe, and who had been among the happy number who professed their faith in the Saviour a few Sabbaths before. The extracts which were read were very touching, and created a very tender feeling in the meeting. We were glad to be permitted to peep into the heart of our sister, although personally unknown to us, and we followed her with our prayers across the Atlantic.

At the July communion there were forty persons received—most of them very young people—quite a number were boys from the Sabbath-school. They were welcomed as the rest with floral honors.

We overheard one young member, who joined in May, saying to her friend—"I can't help what you say. I know it was very nice in June and July, but I shall always think that there never was nor ever can be another such a happy time as the day I joined the church."

The work among the children would form a very interesting portion of our narrative, and we did purpose devoting some space to it, but are deterred by motives of prudence and delicacy from doing so at present. Should it ever seem desirable, it will not be

an unpleasant task to us at some future period. We consider this testimony important as a refutation of the mistaken idea that children of very tender years are not capable of receiving the grace of God effectually. We ourselves were once inclined to this belief, and acknowledge the special goodness of God in permitting us to be witnesses of his power in the hearts of the young. We have now no hesitation in saying that we have seen children give as good and satisfactory evidences of conversion, at the ages of nine, ten, and eleven, as have ever been given by persons of double their age; and the church may yet be surprised by the multitude of children who shall throng the temple door and demand admittance—and shall the disciples refuse them when the Master has said, "Forbid them not?" If Jesus received them so gladly, when only brought by their parents, how much more when they come of their own accord! We do not argue in favor of hasty and indiscriminate admission; but simply say, let the same care be used with regard to the children as the adults, and we believe the result will be satisfactory.

The July communion Sabbath was the last day of the pastor's ministrations among us, before leaving for the country; therefore, at the close of the evening service, there was a universal movement toward the platform in order to exchange a parting salute. We *could not* repress a smile as we heard one friend *say*—"*You* won't forget me, will you?" The boys

who had been received that morning into the church were hanging round the platform, looking with wistful eyes at the flowers, while little groups were scattered all about the house, unwilling to leave the place which has become so much of a home to so many. At last the lights began to vanish one by one, and we betook ourselves slowly and thoughtfully to our homes.

It was over—this blessed season could never be recalled; and now that it was gone, we realized for the first time *how* blessed it had been.

It has been our privilege to be personally acquainted with a few of the newly-received members of our church, and to watch their course from the period of their union with us, and we do joyfully bear witness to the steadfastness and growth in grace manifested by them. We think their experience is characterized in a more than usual degree by the two distinctive elements of love to the brethren and a desire to labor for Christ. Perhaps it may not be inappropriate or uninteresting if we give a little testimony in this direction by way of winding up our story.

Before giving publicity to our narrative, we thought it right to consult some of the persons whose experience we had introduced, as to whether they had any objection to the procedure. Said one lady—"Did you hear *what I said* before the examining commit-

tee?" We replied that we did not know whether it was she or not, but well remembered hearing a lady say she felt almost impelled to go from door to door to tell what God had done for her. "Well," she rejoined, "that was I; now tell what you like about me." Another answered—"I shall think it an honor in any way to bear witness for Christ;" and a third cheerfully responded, "I have already given you my experience in private, and I am not ashamed of it; do any thing you please with it."

Some whom we have visited at their homes, and whose quiet life is known to few, bear witness to the power of the new principle they have received within to sustain them on their monotonous and often solitary path. One observed to us, that she had been told by some persons she must not expect her first joy to last; "but," said she, "I find, on the contrary, it increases daily."

We can take you to the busy store, where the mother, considerably past the prime of life, is incessantly occupied from morning till night, and is moreover the only Christian in the household. You shall ask her what the love of Christ, shed abroad in her heart, has done for her, and she will forget her waiting customer while she tells you, with a countenance lighted up with happiness, that it is her meat and her drink.

We can take you to the quiet dwelling, where the *young girl* of fifteen has watched for the last three

months by the sick bed of her mother, without a companion save her Saviour, without any thing to vary her dull monotony of care, and she will tell you, with tears in her eyes, that when she feels depressed and sorrowful she runs away to her own room, and opens her Bible, when it seems as if God himself actually spoke to her, for the first passage that meets her eye is sure to be—"My grace is sufficient for thee;" or else, "Fear not, I am with thee."

We can take you to the young wife, who sits rocking with her foot the cradle of her little one, while her hands are busy with the needle. You shall hear her singing over some familiar hymn—possibly "Shining Shore"—and by-and-by, when the baby is asleep, you shall see her lay down her sewing, and taking up her Bible and hymn-book, hold "a meeting," as she calls it, all by herself. Put a few questions to her, and she will tell you that when that baby was born, six months ago, she cared for none of these things; her Quaker education had left its impress deep and strong on her mind, and she had never realized the truth that "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" but she went to the morning meetings, she was touched by the power of the Spirit, and rose to be prayed for, and finally on the first Sabbath in May, the brightest day which had ever dawned upon her, not excepting even her wedding-day, she had given herself publicly to Christ and his people.

You shall hear, if you will, the testimony of another young Quakeress, which is just fresh from her own pen. Alluding to our first introduction to one another, which was owing to our detention by a heavy shower of rain at the close of a morning meeting—she says: "—— so seems to me the experience of that eventful morning. I went to meeting sad and dismayed, wishing to love Christ, but not knowing how, and meeting you seemed like the first glimmering of light which foretold the rolling away of the dark clouds of doubt, and the shining forth of the Sun of righteousness; and now, blessed be God, that I do know and love Jesus Christ. I feel so thankful for the many mercies God has bestowed on me that I know not how to express myself."

You can go with us to a house where every inmate but one made a joyous consecration on the same day. You shall see them "diligent in business," and no less "fervent in spirit." They will gladly turn aside from their varied avocations to entertain a Christian friend, and our intercourse shall be sweet one with the other.

You can visit the bedside of the mother, gently passing away in consumption, and almost an angel before her time, and she will tell you how her last days have been gladdened by the conversion of her three children; and if you can stay long enough, we will join them in singing her favorite hymn—"We *are on our* journey home;" and you shall see the

tears of joy trickle down her face, and almost wish you were as near "the new Jerusalem" as she is.

We will take you, as a very great favor, to the little girls' prayer-meeting, and you shall hear a childish voice thanking God for all the great things he has done, but asking him to do still more; entreating a blessing on the pastor and the church we love, and begging that the revival may not stop "till all the world is converted."

You might look in upon the young girl sitting at her sewing-machine all day, or the poor paralytic on her couch, the young Frenchwoman just laying aside her old forms of worship, now become distasteful, and renouncing the intercession of the Virgin for that of the Virgin's Son; the carpenter at his bench, the boy in his office, the patient little girl at work in her mother's kitchen, or amusing the last-born brother; the suffering woman alone in the boarding-house, and cheering her long day by occasional glances at the hymn-book which lies on her table; or the young merchant immersed in the business of his store, and you should hear good news from them all.

You shall pay but one more visit, and that shall be to an English couple, living with a family of eight children in a tenant house. It is Saturday night, and the husband is mending some household utensil; his shirt-sleeves rolled up, and so intent on his occupation that he does not see us as we enter; the wife has a baby *on her knee*, and children are playing about the

room. You need not ask into their circumstances, but sit down by the wife and listen to her; she will tell you of the nice little home she left in England, of the many vicissitudes she has met with in the land of her adoption, of the home-sickness from which she suffered so much. Question her now as to her present feelings, and hear her bless God for that very home-sickness which led her to him. Now her tongue is loosed, and she will tell you about the meetings and the hymns, and the pastor whom she calls her "dear friend," and whose very voice, she declares, always cheers and comforts her; she will tell you that she knew many "fine ministers" in England, but never one like him; and then she will rise, and laying down the baby, will take out of a drawer a framed photograph, and dusting it with her apron, will say—"You see we have him here to look at, though he is away in the country now." You will, perhaps, suggest that she could ill afford the outlay from her hard earnings, but she will tell you "that she must gratify her heart, though at the expense of some bodily necessary;" and you must not chide her—let her give full vent to her feelings, and forget her cares awhile. She is grateful for your visit, and dismisses you with smiles and entreaties that you will return. You can understand her. You are the friend of her friend, and therefore her friend, too. You are a member *of her* church, a disciple of her Lord, a fellow-heir *with her of* the same inheritance, and you will re-

turn to your home glad and thankful for what you have seen.

Our last testimony shall be from one "not a novice," but who has shared in the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, and whose faith and love have been confirmed exceedingly during this past season. She is in the country, but a letter from her lies on our table. She closes thus—"My pleasant visit is almost over, but I shall not be sorry to be quietly settled in dear Brooklyn again, with all the precious privileges we enjoy at our own Plymouth Church. If my life were otherwise ever so dreary, I should always feel that I had a place of refuge and comfort there. Certain it is that I have risen nearer to heaven on the wings of faith and love in our morning meetings for prayer than I ever expect to do again till I am ready to cross the flood."

"Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but to thy name be the glory."

FRAGMENTS, &c.

TAKING in his hand a bouquet which had been laid on his table before the commencement of the prayer-meeting one Friday evening, Mr. Beecher said: "Some one has sent me these flowers, and there is a kind of pleasure in not knowing who it is, for I thank forty persons where I should have thanked but one. I accept these as tokens of love, and they are sweet to me; but now let me tell you how to offer flowers sweeter than these to the Lord Jesus Christ. Your lot may be lowly, and you may never have the opportunity of doing any great thing to show your love to Him, but take your burdens, your cares, your crosses, and make an offering of them; lay them on the altar of consecration, and then take them back and bear them for His sake. No offering of flowers so sweet as this bouquet gathered out of the garden of your heart, no perfume so fragrant as that you send to heaven when at the close of the day you can look up and say, 'Lord Jesus, thou knowest that I have this day performed duties and borne trials for thy sake, that I would not have done or endured for *the sake of* any other either in heaven or on earth."

We were closing the morning meeting with the hymn, known among us as "The Holy City." As we were about to sing the last verse, Mr. Beecher said—"Stop! You know that I love flowers on my table, in my hand, and" (glancing downward) "in my button-hole. It makes a considerable difference, too, what kind of a flower it is. Some flowers have no perfume, while others are rich with fragrance; for example, the rose or the mignonette. Now sometimes I go all the morning with a rose in my button-hole, and never once think of it; and then, perhaps, in some less occupied moment I become suddenly conscious of a sweet odor pervading the air all around me, and I say to myself, 'What is it?' and turning round I look on every side for the cause, when at last my eye lights on the forgotten flower, and I say, 'Ah, of course.' Well, just so it is with the hymns we sing here together; frequently will snatches of melody ring in my ear all the day, and I scarcely know what they are or whence they come. At last I stop and question them, and find it is a verse of one of the hymns we sang at the morning meeting. Now, try this last verse, and see if it will not haunt you through the day. Sing!"—and we sang:

"And what shall be my journey,
How long I'll stay below,
Or what shall be my trials,
Are not for me to know.

In every day of trouble
I'll raise my thoughts on high,
I'll think of the bright temple,
And crowns above the sky."

Thenceforward that verse was known among us "the Rose in the Button-hole."

Another morning, when he had given out tl hymn, "Rock of Ages," he paused a moment to r mind us of a touching incident in the closing scei of Dudley Tyng's life: how, when within a fe minutes of his end, and his heart-stricken relativ were all watching round his bed, he suddenly said- "Sing;" and as, in the agony of the moment, no o responded, he himself, with his dying voice, stru up, "Rock of Ages cleft for me," his wife immediate caught the strain, and sang it through, but when sl reached the end Dudley Tyng was no longer on eartl This allusion to an event, then quite recent, touch a chord in every heart, and gave the tone to the r mainder of the meeting. Mr. Beecher said there h been a discussion in his own family relative to tl event. Some of them maintained it to be an i scrutable mystery that such a man should be tak away so suddenly, just at a time when he was so us ful and so much appreciated; but he said, "No; the was no mystery, and he verily believed that, like Sa son, Dudley Tyng would slay more in his death th *he ever could* have done in his life."

At another time, speaking of the same, he said—"If I could be jealous of any thing, it would be of this, that Dudley Tyng, a man so much younger than myself, should have been accounted worthy to go to heaven before me."

One very rainy morning, Mr. Beecher related the following little incident: "As I was on my way hither, sheltered under my umbrella, and my eyes fixed on the ground, I was stopped most unexpectedly by a woman's voice pronouncing my name. I looked up surprised, for I did not anticipate meeting any one of my acquaintance in that pouring rain. It was a poor woman, meanly clad, yet clean and decent, and with a bundle under her arm. She had a look of care and depression, as if induced by hard work. 'You are Mr. Beecher, sir, I think,' said she. I said, Yes. 'I thought so,' she answered; and continued, 'I have read in the *Sun* a sermon of yours, in which you say that you love all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, no matter by what name they are called.' I told her it was quite true I did. 'Well,' she added, 'I made up my mind that the first time I met you I would shake hands with you.' I gave her my hand very heartily. She said she was a widow, and had to go out sewing for her livelihood; that she would like to come here to church sometimes, but it was so crowded. I told her if she could come to one of the morning meetings I would engage to find her a seat,

and would also introduce her to a Christian lady or two, who would cheer her loneliness by an occasional visit. She promised to come, and we parted. More beautiful than the breaking of the sun through these dark clouds will be the visit of a Christian woman to that poor, solitary widow.

Among the requests for prayer one morning was one from a wife, who stated, in asking prayer for her husband, that every time he discovered a flaw in her conduct he would turn round and say, "A pretty Christian you are!" "Well," said Mr. Beecher, after reading it, "she ought to thank God daily that he has appointed her such a faithful chaplain."

Another petition was from a lady, asking that we would pray for an Irish servant-girl. "That we will most gladly," responded he; "and while we are about it, it might not be amiss to pray for her mistress likewise." Both were faithfully remembered.

In prayer for those newly beginning the Christian life: "May they never cease to feel the beating of Thy heart against their head, pillowed in Thy bosom."

Again: "May we lie in Thy bosom like John, until like him, most loving, we are most loved."

Again: "May we sing against sorrow, and sing it *down; may* we have some sweet testimonial of song *in the face of* every care."

"There are moments of luminousness which come over the soul, when it seems as if the very light of heaven had burst in upon it. They are something like the phenomena which occur at stated and often distant intervals among the heavenly bodies—the transit of a star, or the eclipse of the sun—and when the precise moment has come, you must take an observation quick, or your chance is gone, and gone forever. Only think of a man who should have traveled to Norway for the express purpose of witnessing the last famous solar eclipse, should have ascended the mountain, planted his telescope, and *then* fallen asleep, to awake when all was over."

"I can say with truthfulness, that although surrounded with every thing that can make life desirable, enjoying perfectly magnificent health, engaged in work which I love, and which is prospering beyond my most sanguine anticipations; yet, no ripe apple was ever more ready to fall to the ground than I am to die this very day, if it were the will of God."

To a lady before the examining committee: "Conscience is the *feet*, and they touch the earth, but love is the head, erect, lifted up toward heaven; now the head would certainly do ill without the feet, but the feet still worse without the head."

To another lady: "You may engrave it on a ring

and wear upon your finger, if you like: 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.'"

"If we would only take our children and lay them against the great throbbing heart of Christ, we might have them converted at an age we are apt now to consider as too early for even the beginnings of Christian training.

"If Christian mothers would bestow only the same amount of care on their children's spiritual, as they do on their secular education, how vastly different would be the results. See how the mother watches her daughter sewing, corrects her for pinning her work to her knee, shows her how to keep her hem straight, and insists on neat stitches, sparing no pains, and thinking no amount of care too great if the end be only gained, and she learns to sew well. Ah! yes, it is an important matter, sewing; but the immortal soul— . . .

"The most wonderful thing in this world seems to me that God should give children to any, and the next most wonderful thing is, that being given, any of them should escape the training of their parents."

"The father and mother are God's ordained priests over their own household."

"I have received a very kind but unnecessary letter *from some one*, finding fault with my sermon on the

'Study of the Scriptures,' because I did not dwell especially on the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence. I should as soon think of saying to a man, 'I wish you to examine this flower' (glancing upward as he spoke) 'in humble dependence upon the sunlight.' Why, I take it that the Spirit of God is given forth more abundantly than light or air, and it only remains for us to do our part, and God will abundantly, yea, and superabundantly do his. No, it is not thus that we should read the Scriptures, with an occasional glance toward the blessed Spirit, as if to quicken Him and bring down His aid, but rather with a sense of His glorious, all-pervading light, as available and as free as the air we breathe."

"The other day I was trying a pair of horses which my children were to use this summer; so I took my seat by my son Henry, and put the reins in his hand. I did not intend to drive, but to watch him and give him a little instruction. For a while all went on smoothly, but by-and-by, perceiving something in their path, the animals began to prick up their ears and be frisky. Henry was going to use the whip, but I stopped him. 'No, no,' said I, 'speak coaxingly to them.' Presently we came to a turning. 'Now, Henry,' I said, 'prepare them gradually for it, and don't jerk the reins all at once.' All this time I had merely sat by him and given him directions, but now, *seeing* a heavy vehicle coming at a quick pace

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directly in front of us, I took the reins out of his hand, and drove myself until we were fairly past. Now just in this way does Christ watch over us through life, doing nothing for us which we are capable by his grace and guidance of doing for ourselves, but when an emergency comes for which we are not prepared, taking the direction into His own hands, and carrying us safely through."

One Monday morning, after hearing results from the sermons of the previous day: "I did not need to be told this; I should have known even had no one spoken. I well remember that in the fall, when I was a boy, I used to lie in bed listening to the wind, and rejoicing in the thought that the next morning I should find beautiful ripe apples shaken off the tree that grew at the back of my father's house. Just so did I know that fruit fell yesterday, for I heard the wind."

"A great evil in the church has been the use of stereotyped expressions in religious conversation or exhortation. I remember, when I was young, that one of the favorite expressions in the pulpit used to be, "laying down the weapons of rebellion." Now my mind instantly reverted to swords, spears, and guns, and as I had never in my life had the chance to take these up I could not conceive by what possi*bility I was to* lay them down."

"If life is smooth and pleasant, and you are sailing down the stream, not a ripple to oppose your progress, why then it may be that the thought of heaven is not much to you. But take a man who is obliged to use all the religious engineering of which he is capable, in order to get through each single day, and the idea of heaven is unspeakably sweet to him. I keep heaven to grow timber to bridge over the bad places in life."

"Let us hear from the brethren any thing they have to communicate—incidents, narratives, thoughts—any thing but exhortations. I hate exhortations—stupid people exhorting stupid people—for the most part nothing but religious rattle."

"I never work with a sense of responsibility; it is a miserable foundation for any man, and one which will never sustain him. Love is the principle on which God intended we should work, and it is the only one which will prove lasting. People often come to me on the platform on a Sunday evening, and say, 'What an immense responsibility!' I reply, 'Not at all. I never take any responsibility; it is a thing I know nothing of.' The only command I find in the Bible with reference to that subject is, 'Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.' Now I do literally and truly lay all my burdens on the Lord Jesus Christ, and he carries them for me. Hence

it is that I can work more easily, and keep up longer than some. As for preaching to large congregations, it matters little whether I speak to fifty or to five thousand; in the former case I am bound to do the best I can, and in the latter I can do no more. It is my part to work, it is God's to care. Suppose that I should begin to think over the cases of all the families in my church—their troubles, their difficulties, their sins, and should take on a weight of care on their account—'carry them on my heart,' as it is called. I love them, if that is carrying them on my heart; but suppose that I should think of them in the way I have described until my mind became disturbed, and I could not sleep for two nights in the week, perchance, do you think that this would be pleasing to God, or would conduce to the welfare of the persons concerned? I will never do it! I will carry their burdens, just so far as this, that I will pray for them, will instruct them to the best of my ability, will comfort and counsel them, but not one step farther."

One Friday evening, when trying to prevail on some of the new converts to speak: "When I was a boy, and was first learning to swim, I remember how I used to walk into the water, slowly and timidly, first ankle-deep, then knee-deep, and so on higher and higher, shivering all the while. But after a time I learned that I might save myself all that discomfort *by taking* the shock at once all over, and I went in

with a plunge, thenceforth being no more troubled with cold shivers. Now this may serve as an illustration of the way in which some people set about the performance of a Christian duty. It is something they have made up their minds they ought to do; it may be to say a few words for Christ in the midst of their brethren; it may be to open their lips for the first time in prayer before their own families, and they hesitate and hesitate, and put themselves to perfect agonies of mental torture before they can determine on taking the step. The preliminaries cost them a hundredfold more than the act itself. Now why do you not save yourselves all this suffering by taking the plunge at the first?

"If you go out in the fields, and should want to gather nettles, take care how you handle them; if you grasp them firmly they will not hurt you, but touch them lightly and you will find your hands stung all over. Just so with duty, grasp it hard and the sting is gone."

(A member of the church, whose voice had never before been heard in our meetings, instantly rose and said: "Mr. Beecher, I may as well grasp the nettle at once.")

When taking leave of the church for his summer vacation, he spoke of his mingled feelings—pleasure on the one hand, in the prospect of enjoying the relaxation and the country—regret on the other at leav-

ing. "I feel as if no one could care for you all a well as myself. I don't know whether this aris from conceit, but I think not altogether. I do n believe the mother is conceited exactly, because sh thinks no one can do for her baby as she can."

At the close of a meeting when, owing to th quaintness of speech of some of the brethren, espec ally the newly-awakened ones, in the relation of the varied experiences, we had laughed and cried alter ately, the one as heartily as the other, Mr. Beech said: "I call you to witness whether this has n been a good meeting—whether there has not been tender spirit among us, and whether the influence o the Holy Ghost has not been here? I say this, b cause, as you know, many persons entertain the opi ion that laughing is quite inexpedient on such occ sions as these, and a sure means of grieving away th Spirit. Bear this meeting in mind, and let it be yo answer to the charge of irreverence whenever it ma be brought against us on this score."

"When I look out from my windows (and you kno I have a pair of wonderful windows), I have a goo view of the shipping of the harbor, and sometimes have stood very early in the morning and watch *how as daylight* broke, vessel after vessel would r *up her colors,* as much as to say, 'Here I am.' Th *was no difficulty* in discovering their various nat

for I could distinguish at a glance. On one floated the Spanish flag, on another the British, then the Swedish, the Danish, the Russian, and the Portuguese. Can you fancy a ship-master ashamed of his colors? Never. Now this is just as it should be with Christians. Their colors should be flying all day long, so that it would be easy to recognize them everywhere; and for that matter they might keep them up all night too; it would not hurt them."

"There is a great difference in the way that different men bear troubles; some seem to be constitutionally so irritable that they never can submit even to small annoyances without writhing under them. You know how it is with the horse—if a single fly rest on him he stamps and shakes himself with impatience, and if he cannot get rid of the teasing insect quickly he will work himself into a fever of excitement and anger; the ox, on the contrary, will allow himself to be almost covered, and will graze quietly all the while."

A gentleman related how he had been seeking for some time past to bring a young man of his acquaintance to church with him, but in vain; he steadily refused, and was very bitter in his expressions about Mr. Beecher. At length, however, he got him to *hear* a sermon, and there he wept like a child, and *went home* converted. "Served him just right,"

said Mr. Beecher; "I should like to be revenged in the same way upon all those that feel bitterly toward me."

"Remember Christ came to *seek* as well as to save, and though we may be able to imitate Him but very feebly in this respect, yet this should be our ideal."

Some one read a letter from a gentleman in a distant state, who had been at our services of the previous Sabbath, and went away deeply affected, remarking that many a man was wounded, like the king of Israel, by a bow drawn at a venture. Mr. Beecher replied: "I never drew my bow at a venture. I always aim directly at some man, and know that at the same time I must hit twenty others."

"I am never dependent for help in our meetings solely upon the brethren who may be present; should they be disinclined to speak, I have other resources. I can call on Charles Wesley (and though he is a Methodist, we are glad to hear from him), and he will tell, in strains almost like an angel's, of the love of Christ; or I can turn to John Newton, and say—'Saint redeemed from the jaws of the devil, let us have a little of your experience.' I can summon good old Dr. Watts and Toplady from their graves, or Madame *Guion from* her prison, and they will none of

them refuse to speak. So you see by this means we are always sure of a good meeting."

"One of the greatest difficulties I have to contend with in conversing with persons on religious subjects, is their ignorance of the Scriptures. Their knowledge of religious truth has been gained chiefly at meetings, in listening to the exhortations or experiences of others; hence their views are often very incorrect and obscure, and they are not able to take in the instruction I seek to impart to them. On the other hand, no cases have been so satisfactory as those where the persons were well acquainted with the literal text of Scripture. Nothing can compensate for a deficiency in this respect."

"I never despair of any except the Pharisees, and even Christ himself thought there was no gospel for them."

"I once asked a venerable and sainted minister, whose intimate friendship I enjoyed in the early part of my own labors, what he thought of admitting very young people into the church. 'I have often been sorry,' he replied, 'for many *old* persons that I admitted, but I never yet regretted the admission of a single young one.'"

"One of the most touching things I remember ever

to have read was the life of a Moravian brother, who became so intensely interested in the condition of the slaves in the West Indies (it was during the time of British slavery), and especially in this feature of their case—their entire deprivation of all religious instruction, and the impossibility of giving them any under the existing laws—that he actually sold himself for a slave, and worked, chained in a gang, with the rest, that he might talk to them of Christ. This is precisely what Christ did for the world."

"Never allow yourselves to suppose that God is by any means confined to a plan in his operations, in such a sense as that he cannot alter that plan in answer to prayer. He can do it, and He has promised that He will. Moreover there is a power in united prayer of a special kind. It has pleased God to make known to us that where there are a number of persons all making request for the same thing, so that their petitions come up before Him as one voice, there is a peculiar efficacy in such prayer to draw down His blessing. We know how it is with a father and his children. They have arranged a pleasure excursion, and they want him to go with them, but he declines; his business presses, he has engagements which cannot be put off. They are not discouraged, but renew their importunities, though with little apparent success. At last the morning comes, and he is awoke *by the sound* of busy feet and of merry voices all

over the house; the door-bell rings, and familiar tones of friendship fall on his ear. He rises, and before long the little feet run along the passages, and the voices of his children are heard at the door begging him to come out. He cannot resist; and, as soon as he appears, some seize his hands, others cling round his waist and legs, while one twines her arm round his neck, and laying her finger on his lip, says, 'Don't say no, father; don't say no!' and so he is carried away in triumph. He does not think of making any opposition, but half-smiling half-tearful, he lets them lead him on as they please, a willing captive. This is not intended as an actual representation of the way in which God is influenced; but it may serve to illustrate the idea that there is something in the heart of God which is susceptible to the influence of united prayer."

"There came to me last night" (spoken one Wednesday morning), "two working-men from New York, who had been wandering up and down for two hours in search of my house. The one was an Englishman and the other a German, though understanding English. The former was spokesman, and proceeded to inform me that both he and his friend had been somewhat given to liquor. His trade was that of a cobbler, and he was sitting at his bench that afternoon when his companion came in and wanted to borrow half a *dollar*. He declined to lend it to him, not be-

cause he could not, but because he was persuaded it would do him no good. 'At last,' said he, 'I laid down my work, and stood up. Look here,' said I to him, 'I'll tell you what it is, neither you nor I will be good for any thing till we leave off drinking entirely; and now I'll tell you what we'll do, we'll go right over to Brooklyn and get Henry Ward Beecher to give us the pledge; and so here we are, sir.' I asked them how they came to think of *me* rather than some other minister nearer home. They told me it was because they had seen my name so often in the New York *Herald*. I took them to the house of a brother, and we administered the pledge to them. I also invited them to come over to the lecture this evening, and they promised they would. What may be the result I do not know, but at any rate I am for once indebted to the *Herald* for a service."

(One of the brethren stated that he was also under personal obligation to that sheet, for it had been the means of introducing him to his present pastor. We know another brother who could have stated that it was the articles of the *Journal of Commerce* which first led him to Plymouth Church.)

There were a good many spectators in the gallery at the May communion, and Mr. Beecher remarked during the service: "We are not all here yet; there *are* ripe apples up there" (looking up) "which will *shake down* here before next communion Sabbath."

On one occasion a gentleman spoke of the trying circumstances in which one of the new converts was placed, from the fact of his having concluded it to be his duty to relinquish the employment which was his only means of subsistence, but in which he found it impossible to serve God. Mr. Beecher expressed his confident persuasion that God would not allow a child of his, in such a position and from such a cause, to suffer want; rather would He again rain manna from heaven, and again bring water out of the rock.

The very next morning he read a letter which he had received from some unknown person, signing himself "Homeward Bound," and inclosing fifty dollars for the use of the young man whose case had been mentioned.

Some requests for prayer were forwarded to Mr. Beecher by Horace Greeley. They were from persons in the West, who, seeing the daily report of the religious meetings in the *Tribune*, had supposed the editor to be deeply interested in the subject, and, not knowing Mr. Beecher's address, had written to him. We presume that it was the first time such a communication had been dispatched to the office of any secular newspaper.

A stranger related one morning the conversion of a man who had been noted for his profane habits. He had been induced to attend several meetings

among our Methodist brethren; there he had been convinced of his sinfulness and the necessity of a complete change. He resisted these convictions as long as he could, being unwilling to humble himself, and enter the kingdom of heaven as a little child. He absented himself from the meetings, in order, if possible, to get rid of these impressions, but it was in vain—they haunted him day and night. At last, in a fit of great distress, he was compelled again to seek the place of prayer, but being late could find no way of access. He walked from one door to another with no success, but being determined to effect an entrance he climbed to one of the windows, and pushing it up thrust his head through, crying, in an agony of feeling: "Let me come to the altar, or I shall die!" A passage was opened for him; he found his way to the altar, and there obtained the pardon of his sins and peace with God.

Mr. Beecher simply remarked, at the close of the account, that he rejoiced exceedingly in the man's conversion, but thought it was not necessary for him to reach the altar in order to find Christ. He was just as near to him when outside the church.

Brother D., after a week's absence, told us that he had been on a visit to his native place, where every one was astonished to find him so communicative on *religious* matters, knowing what a close-mouthed kind *of Christian* he had hitherto been. He said that he

had been besieged with applications from persons who had friends here, and who entreated him to get them to attend the morning meetings—adding, that they had all great confidence in these meetings.

"Have they great confidence in God?" asked Mr. Beecher. "How do they stand in this respect?"

Brother F. related a little anecdote he had learned during a visit to one of our sick members on the past Sabbath. In the same house with this excellent Christian family lived a man and wife, who were utterly regardless even of the forms of religion; the husband, indeed, was an avowed infidel. The wife had, however, been taken by some one to the meetings in a neighboring Methodist Church, and unknown to her husband had become interested in them. One day he was scoffing in her presence at the revival, expressing his disbelief in every thing of the kind, especially ridiculing the Methodist modes of labor, and winding up with a threat that he would soon stop any of his family who should be guilty of the folly of going up to the altar. "Why," said his wife, throwing her arms round his neck, and giving him a kiss, "do you know that *I* was there last night?" "No," he replied, returning her salutation; "but I am glad of it." He was softened; that same evening he accompanied her to meeting, and went up to the altar himself.

"I like that," said Mr. Beecher, "and like the way it was done, too. Christ was betrayed by a kiss, and

it is time that he was honored by the same instrumentality."

A pastor of a Presbyterian church in New Jersey gave us very interesting details of the work which was going on in the little village where he resided. There is no other church in the place except one belonging to the Methodists, and he and they had been working together most harmoniously and delightfully. Large additions had been made to both these churches from all sorts and conditions of men. A considerable number were Catholics, and not a few Germans. His errand to New York was in connection with the latter. One of them, as soon as he had found Christ for himself, had "no rest in his spirit for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh," and the day before he had bid him God-speed on his way to his fatherland, where he burned to tell what wonders God had wrought.

Speaking of the struggle which takes place in some minds before they obtain peace in Christ, Mr. Beecher said: "There is almost always some recess in every soul, some secret place that it desires to keep for itself, and hence the conflict between it and Christ. He will come into no heart unless the whole be put *into His* possession. A man will present him with *the key of* every apartment save, perchance, one— *'Come in,* Lord, anywhere, everywhere thou wilt, ex-

cept *here*.' In such a case that is the only place which Christ desires to enter—that is the citadel—. . . I recollect the struggle I had with my own child, then a little more than three years old. I came in one day, and, seating myself in my chair, called upon her, as she was playing happily about the room, to fetch my shoe—it was nothing new—many a time had she done it before; but now she looked at me with a smiling face, but did not stir. I repeated my command, but with no better result; she steadily refused. 'Now,' said I to myself, 'comes the crisis, and we must see who is to gain the day.' I called her to me, and she came quite cheerfully. I pointed to the shoe, but she would not look at it; she threw her arms round my neck, and would kiss me just as long as I would let her; she brought me an apron, a book, any thing but the shoe—that she would not touch. And here was the dispute between us, for nothing but the shoe would satisfy me. 'Fetch me that shoe,' said I; but no. For more than two hours the conflict lasted, and then she suddenly grasped it in her little hand, and rushing up to me threw herself into my arms in a violent fit of weeping, her little frame perfectly convulsed with sobs; but she was conquered."

"Some men say, 'I would become a Christian, if I *only first understood* all the doctrines of Christianity. *Tell me what is* this doctrine of the Trinity, of the

atonement, of justification, of adoption?' My reply to all such persons is, 'You need no such instruction as this; you know already much on all these subjects, and are no better for it. What you need is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour; after that, you can examine into all these doctrines as much as you please.' Suppose a man suffering from weakness of sight, should say to the optician, 'It is impossible for me to put on these spectacles, unless you first give me satisfactory explanations as to all the processes by which they are made. I wish to know how the steel is manufactured into its present form, how the glass is prepared, &c. When you have satisfied me on all these points, then I will try them on.' There is no man who would act so absurdly in secular things."

"People say, 'Show me Christ; I cannot believe in him unless I see him.' Now, I have in my possession a portfolio filled with engravings of many of the principal structures in Europe—St. Peter's of Rome, the Vatican, the cathedrals of France and Germany. Suppose that a friend of mine should hear me say, 'I want to be able to form some definite idea for myself of the Vatican.' Would he not naturally say to me, 'Why don't you open your portfolio; there you *have, to my* knowledge, three or four different views *of that building*, taken from so many different points. *Now no* frescoes of Michael Angelo can compare wit

those of the four gospels; there you have the portrait of the Lord Jesus Christ painted in living colors, by four different artists, and what can be done for people who, with such a portfolio as this in their hands, turn away from it and ask to see Christ?"

"There are some people who would be saints if the Lord would only make them poor, so that they had to wash for their living, but they are destroyed by the very abundance of their mercies."

"When *my* head aches with thinking, Christ is never weary, and I lay my head on the bosom of Him who has done so much for me."

"I imagine any one trying to insult me by reproaching me with the name of my father and mother—why it would be like throwing roses at me. So it should be with Christians in regard to the name of their Master."

"The *nature* of Christ's heart is medicinal. His heart resting on any human heart restores it when wrong, develops it when right."

"Christ in heaven differs from Christ on earth, only as the blossom differs from the seed."

"If I wanted to see Christ, I would not go back to *Gethsemane*; rather let me have a glimpse of the gardens above, and see Him crowned in heaven."

"It is deeply affecting to think that God walked among men unable to do them the kindness he wished, obliged to suppress His goodness, carrying his great heart through life, we had almost said shut up. Only a few felt the power of His benefactions; He was full of gifts, yet gave little; full of salvation, yet few were saved; He had all manner of treasures for the soul, but they were rejected."

"God gives as the wheat gives; we sow one grain, and reap a hundred."

"The old idea of God doing all things for his own glory has been injurious to many. They have supposed God to be selfish, and it is a recognised fact that what men suppose their God to be that they will seek to be themselves. The chief evil of this view, however, is that it hides His true nature, and substitutes for it another and an opposite one. If God lives for his own glory, and we will allow that he does, the question arises, 'What is His glory?' Moses asked, 'I beseech Thee show me now Thy glory;' and God said, 'I will make my *goodness* to pass before thee.' He did not point to the grandeur of His works in creation, but He opened His *heart* and said, '*Here* is my glory.' It is to love those who deserve no love, to help those who have none to help them."

"*When I speak* of the intercession of Christ, I do

not think of him as merely standing at God's right-hand, and turning sometimes to the Father and sometimes to us, but as actually *doing* for us all that we need."

"Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and punctuated his prophecy with tears."

"The disciples were looking for a throne on Mount Moriah, Christ for a throne on Mount Calvary."

"It is not when you have given the finishing touch to your toilet, put the last drop of perfume on your handkerchief, and seated yourself comfortably in the sanctuary—it is not *then* that you most need the sense of God's presence; it is in the household, among your children, at your needle, in the kitchen, amid all the busy scenes of domestic life. Why not make God a companion and friend, *then?*"

"Suppose every Bible on the face of the earth should be burned, would the truths contained by them be destroyed? Just as much as botany would be destroyed were I to tear up every copy now extant of Linnæus. The living specimens are abroad over the whole earth, and are reproducing themselves every hour."

"Divine sovereignty is the wisdom and goodness of God directing man to happiness and virtue."

"The earth is God's school-house — a blessed Teacher, but sorry scholars!"

"'Giving up all for Christ' has come now to be so misconstrued, that it had better be 'taking on all for Christ.'"

"The coming of Christ to the soul is like the coming of the sun to the earth. What has the sun taken away from the earth but snow, ice, and death?"

"'Many are called, but few are chosen.' This is the testimony of Christ as to his own personal ministrations on earth."

"Great crowds followed Him; there was, in short, a revival of religion, many listened to His preaching, yet few were effectually converted. And so it is in our day. Why is it that with the abundance of God's calls, so few heed them?"

"It is not through any fault on the part of God— neither is it through any lack of ability in man— there is no deficiency in his understanding, his affections, or in his choosing power, the commands of God to man never transcend his powers of obedience. Nor are men left unconverted because of any fatality. Duty lies between power and will, and no man is *punished* but for violation of God's law from free-will. *Neither is it* because there is any thing hard in the

conditions which God proposes. Does it seem hard to be a Christian? How hard does a man work to lie down? How hard is it to admire a beautiful thing? How hard to be loosed from chains? Men take more trouble to fortify themselves against Christ than ever would be required to receive him as their guest."

"Neither is it because God, having ostensibly offered salvation, through reasons of state denies the power to accept it. No! there is no chicanery or diplomacy in the government of God. Men speak of Him sometimes as though His main concern was to guard the honor of His law, and as if, in comparison with this, the welfare of His creatures was secondary, but it is not so. God's *heart* is his law, and he lives not to take care of his law, but of living hearts. If God could ostensibly offer salvation to *all*, yet with a concealed law interfering which made it impossible for more than one in five thousand to accept it—if such a God could exist, it must be in hell, not in heaven. The language of our God is simple and frank, and we believe he means just what he says. Could it be proved otherwise, not Mary alone would say, 'They have taken away my Lord.'"

"People ask me why I do not preach on election. I reply, simply because I know nothing about it, and never preach about things I do not understand. 'Whosoever will, let him come,' there is my election.

There are but two conditions to God's mercy—*wa*
and willingness; but these sweet truths of God hav
been webbed over by theologians as the flowers of th
prairie by black and ugly spiders."

"The tenderness and tearfulness of God is one c
the most surprising manifestations of his nature; f
I take the words literally, '*God* was manifest in th
flesh.' The immutable, yet ever-melting God. N
that we suppose God actually to shed tears, but w
believe him to be capable of the feelings which l
behind tears, and of which they are only the ou
ward expression. We expect children to weep, bu
as they grow up toward manhood they lay aside th
habit; women shed tears as easily as flowers cast th
dew; and sometimes the strong, iron-made man wh
has looked dangers in the face unmoved, and befo
whose stern countenance death itself has quailed an
let go his grasp, melts when it is his little one that
imperilled; but who shall fathom the wonderful my
tery that our God is touched with the feeling of ou
infirmities?"

"It is a blessed thing to me to know that m
God is not only the shadow of a great rock i
a weary land, but that there is also a gush to th
rock."

"There are many with whom Christ sits, yea, abid
and breaks bread, making their hearts burn with jo

and wonder, yet they know not that it is Christ till he vanishes out of their sight."

"My heart yearns after men as I walk through the streets. Often I would like to stop a man and say, 'Oh, sir, *do* you know?' 'Know *what?*—some bank broken?' 'No, not that. Do you know that *God's heart* was broken for you?'"

"Many Christians are accustomed to speak of their hours of meditation and prayer as their religious hours, and of those employed in secular affairs as 'worldly.' Now this is a mistake; the whole life of a Christian should be one act of dedication to God, and the only distinction between his hours of actual worship and of secular work should be, that in the former he gathers strength, and preparation for the latter. We generally speak of the public ordinances of religion as 'means of grace,' and so they are, but not the *only* means. Our daily duties, labors, cares, anxieties, perplexities, vexations, enjoyments, in short the whole of God's providential dealings with us are so many means of grace; at least they are so intended by God, and it is our own fault if they are not."

"There is not in the present day the same tendency in men to become anchorites, and under pretext of serving God, shut themselves out of the world. Yet there is a sort of idea still prevalent among

Christians that true religion consists in an elevated frame of feeling, which raises them entirely above the world, and they are not satisfied if they do not attain to some mystical experience which shall make them forget human things. They do not sufficiently realize the connection between the spiritual and the practical in religion. What would be the roots of a tree without the leaves, or the leaves without the root, or both without the connecting branches?

"Every ethical precept has a root in the earth, and herein it is no part of Christianity to become indifferent to earthly duties and employments, or to endeavor to forget our cares and burdens by living in a fancy of our own out of the world. You will, perhaps, ask—'What, then, is the apostle's meaning when he says, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.' Set your affections on things above. Read a little farther, and you will see whether the apostle intended that this should be accomplished by a habit of morbid contemplation, or by actual contact with the duties and trials of the world. 'Mortify, *therefore*, your members which are upon the earth;' and still farther on, 'Put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.'

"Where can these vices be mortified, or these virtues exercised, but in the stern realities of every-day *life*?

"*Not that* prayer, praise, and meditation are to be

undervalued, but they should be the *preparation* for duty, never its *substitute*. Let them be to the Christian what the stars are to the sailor—steer by them! The sailor would be indeed guilty, if he failed to look at the stars; but should he content himself with gazing on them, and neglect the management of the ship, what would be the consequence?

"The object of religion is not to make dreamy speculators, but real, earnest, vigorous men. It is not to remove the burden from our path, or so to preoccupy our minds as to make us forget it, but better and nobler than either, to enable us to *bear* it.

"No prayer was so richly answered as when Christ pleaded, 'Let this cup pass from me.' God said no, but sent an angel to strengthen Him.

"Paul besought the Lord thrice that his thorn in the flesh might be removed. God said no; but, better than that, gave him grace to bear it."

"Every duty, however mean, should be the altar on which you place your offering to God; all your daily labors should be as acts of devotion, and so your life would become one entire consecration.

"If your work be mean or disagreeable, let your religion weave over it a network of flowers, beautify it with piety, but never desert it; that sacrifice is *more acceptable* to your God than incense and burnt-offering."

"Every one believes that God loves the world with a general, sweeping kind of love; that He loves the reformed, the respectable, the elect—but wretches, thieves, drunkards! Yes, He loves these; and the truth I want to tell you this morning is, that *God loves sinners* — not when they repent, but before. 'While we were yet sinners, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.'"

"Some men treat us with kindness and grace, because they are *well bred*, others because they are *well born*."

"Christ pardons, not because it is his office, but because it is his nature."

"Fear not death. Think you a mother ever forgets her daughter's bridal hour? And shall God, who has never forgotten you one moment during your life, fail to remember that final consummation for which all of life was but the preparation—shall He forget the bridal of His child?"

"There are many men who stand, year after year, waiting for some special and irresistible influence to come over them and transform them, as it were, with one mighty sweep into Christians. They are like a ship-master who waits for the wind to loose his cables and raise his anchors."

"*There* were plainly two kinds of affection in Christ,

as in us—the general feeling, which we style benevolence and the individual and special attachment. We are apt to overlook the fact that God loves, not only in the general way, but also with that individuality and speciality of which we are ourselves capable one toward the other.

"It is the *distinctness* of affection that makes it the peculiar treasure of the possessor. We love our father with a love altogether different from that which we bestow upon wife, sister, or friend.

"It is a source of great delight to me to think that there is any thing in man which can be an attraction to God his Creator. It is precious to know that God pities, that he pardons; but that he *loves* with special affection and can take delight in us—this is overwhelming. Yet both the Old and New Testaments abound in illustrations of this truth.

"There is, moreover, blessed encouragement in considering who were the objects of this special love.

"There was nothing particularly attractive in the natural character of the apostles; it would not be difficult to select twelve men who should be their superiors in amiability, and other qualities fitted to attract love.

"Look at them: stupid, ignorant, quarrelsome, ambitious, coarse-minded. Think of them as the constant companions of the Saviour; think, too, of the circumstances in which he was—his awful sufferings full in view and close at hand, so that his soul was

well-nigh overwhelmed. Or, if you look beyond his sufferings at the joy which was set before him, and imagine the anticipations which filled his soul of the welcome which awaited him back to heaven, and the universal glory which should be his, you might almost expect to hear that he *loved* his own, but when the time came for him to leave them he was glad of it.

"But it was not so: 'He loved them to the end.'

"And as the sun frequently departs from our view with more resplendent glories than it possesses in its meridian brightness, so the love of Jesus grew stronger, more tender, more fervent, as the hour drew near when he must leave them, and never was it so strong as in the last parting moment.

"They themselves bear this witness: 'He loved us to the end.' They were the objects of his love, and their testimony may be relied on—for the recipients of love are always quick to perceive any decline in the strength, purity, or fragrance of that which is their peculiar treasure.

"How wonderful is this record! How we thank the Saviour for such a testimony! Since he was capable of such love, to such persons, who need despair?

"It is easy to love that which is lovable; but Jesus loved those who had nothing in them calculated to move love.

"Here is a mystery! But this is the grand secret of redemption—God's love to the undeserving. It is *true the apostles* afterward became eminently lovely,

noble, heroic; but they were not so when Christ chose them and first loved them.

"Who can read their history in the Gospels, and then follow them through the Acts and the Epistles, and not be filled with wonder at the change which took place in these men after they had received the Holy Ghost? But Jesus loved them as they were at first.

"There is something ineffably tender in His last conversations with His disciples. We ofttimes shrink from expressing our love in words, especially is this the case with *men* in their friendships the one with the other. Yet behold the Saviour, surrounded by these rough, unpolished men, a few hours before his suffering and death, pouring out his heart to them in strains of the richest affection, repeating over and over again the express assurance of his unchanging love for them.

"How we thank Him for the precious truth conveyed to us by these facts, even more than by His promises.

"Had the women with whom our Lord associated been as pure, as matchless, as inimitable as the Madonnas of Raphael—had the men been all noble, high-minded, and faultless, we should have sunk down in despair, exclaiming—'Yes; He could love such as *they*, but we are not like them.'

"Here, then, is our hope, not in any worthiness of of our own, not in any measure of love which we

may feel toward Him, but in that wondrous, incomprehensible nature which prompts Christ to love those who are unlovable.

"And it is here that the Christians of the present day seem to fall short in experience; they do not enter as they ought into the joyful belief in the love of Jesus, they do not open their hearts wide to the refreshing assurance of His personal and unchanging affection.

"It is true that in the proportion in which we grow into the image of our Lord, we make ourselves congenial to him. Yet every day's experience will but humble us as we discover how far we fall below even our own standard of excellence, and our only refuge will be in the assurance that Christ loves, not for any merit of ours, but of his own free will. . . .

"Let us dwell more on this theme; and when we examine ourselves, let it not be so much as to the measure of love we feel toward Christ, but rather as to the measure in which we realize and believe in His love toward us. In short, let the time be spent more in looking at Christ, and less in viewing ourselves.

"It is a glorious thing to walk in a gallery of paintings the works of the great masters, and become so absorbed in contemplation as to be hardly conscious of one's own presence, but how much more glorious to forget one's self entirely in the contemplation of *Jesus!*"

"A little bird, flying gayly about from tree to tree, becomes suddenly conscious of the gaze of a green-eyed and baleful serpent. Horror-stricken, yet fascinated by the monster's charm, it loses all power of self-preservation, and with ruffled feathers and wings uselessly expanded, it draws gradually nearer and nearer to its doom.

"But you are standing by, and, perceiving the danger, you seize your stick, attack the foul snake, and break the fascination which is going to destroy the poor little bird.

"Recovering from its fright, it ascends first to a bush, then to a bough, and there smoothing its ruffled bosom, and viewing itself on all sides, it seems hardly to know whether it is itself or not; but finally becoming assured of its deliverance, spreads its wings once more, and soars out of your sight, singing all the way.

"So it is with a soul rescued by Christ Jesus from the old serpent; scarcely at first can it realize the magnitude and blessedness of its deliverance, but when at last it shall comprehend the fullness of its salvation, all heaven shall be resonant with its joy."

"I do not see how a woman, with her ardent, susceptible, clinging nature, can look into the face of the Lord Jesus, and not love him."

"I was summoned from my dinner the other day

by the message that a stranger desired to see me. I obeyed the call reluctantly and somewhat slowly, little suspecting that Christ waited for me in the parlor. I was not prepossessed by the appearance of my visitor, who announced himself as a converted Jew, always in my eye rather a suspicious applicant.

"He began by telling me of his poverty, and I listened, feeling a kind of internal impatience working all the while. 'Of course you are poor,' said I to myself, 'or you would not have found me out.' He went on to speak of his wife and children. 'Yes,' I thought; 'you know how to take me. You are going to open my heart with your wife and children as an oyster is opened by a knife.'

"I was almost making up my mind to resist his appeal, when he put the climax to his story by telling me how God, in the riches of his goodness, had sent him two little gifts when he had expected but one, and having been barely able to provide for one, the other had lain ten days with no covering but a blanket.

"I could bear no more—the scales fell from my eyes—I saw it was Christ that stood before me, and I heard His voice, saying, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'"

"'Let him that is greatest among you be your servant.' You all know what that means. Your *father and mother* are the greatest persons in the

house, and yet they are the servants of every child in the family.

"That little pulp-brained infant that knows nothing and feels nothing is the monarch of the household—the father and mother are its two servants; cradled in the mother's arm, which is the child's throne, it reigns supreme; every movement is watched, its faintest cry is to them as the blast of a trumpet.

"The reason is simple, where love is it *must* come down."

SKETCHES AND FRAGMENTS OF PRAYER.

SUNDAY MORNING, APRIL 25.

"THOU art standing and watching in the midst of Thy power, the world's Saviour yet, as fresh, as tender, as fair as when Thou didst walk in Jerusalem. . . .

"Behind the dark curtain of Thy purposes we cannot penetrate, if we would. We know not the reason of ten thousand things that Thou doest, and we desire not to know. They that would search into Thy hidden ways are as the waves that dash themselves against the rocks, which they can neither break nor penetrate, only to be thrown back again, and themselves broken in their fall. We adore Thy wisdom, Thy greatness, Thy power, but we marvel most at this wonderful love of Christ, revealed so sweetly in his life. We believe that Thou art the God of avenging power, who dost hold in Thy hand the rod wherewith Thou wilt bruise thine enemies, yet is love Thy chief attribute. We beseech Thee that we may be won by the gentleness and love of Christ to present our bodies a living sacrifice to Him. So gentle art *Thou, O Lord* Jesus, so loving, so ready to forgive—

art not Thou the one whom sinners want? We bear witness to Thee as a church and as individuals. Thou art in Thyself all fullness, and there is no necessity of our souls that is not supplied by Thee. Thou dost not forsake Thy church; Thou art patient more than parents are, and that our souls know right well. We beseech of Thee that thou wilt give unto those who are beginning to tread Thy ways great confidence, not in themselves, but in Thee. May they ever have before them the vision of Christ, who never leaves nor forsakes them; and if the vision should be at times withdrawn, let it not stay long away—restore it to them speedily—hold them up everywhere with Thy right hand. May all their feelings be subdued to Christ—may he be their joy, their pride, their glory. May their life interpret to the world more than sermons, what is the truth of God. And may this church be very grateful for Thine abundant goodness. How wonderful is its history. . . .

"May they remember Thy marvelous dealings with them, not that they may be proud or vainglorious, but may they feel that Thou hast called them to do great things for Christ. May it be their joy to be like Christ.

"May they bear witness for the truth always, and never so earnestly and so gladly as when men will not hear; and if need be, may they be ready not only to bear witness, but also to suffer for the truth. May they be *increased*, not half so much in numbers as in

grace, and we beseech of Thee that Thou wilt make them very humble.

"May they be sorrowful because of their unprofitableness and unfaithfulness, and yet full of rejoicing because of Thy great goodness toward them; and so may they be kept continually vibrating between sadness and gladness, and thus wilt Thou prepare them by humbling them to receive into their bosom so many as Thou art giving them. . . .

"And now, we beseech Thee, that Thou wilt go on with Thy work. Lord Jesus, behold the sick that throng Thy temple door, the blind that look into Thy face with sightless eye-balls—the lame, the deaf, the dead!

"May all Thy churches hold up holy hands of thanksgiving and unwearied hands of industry, and so may Thy truth spread and triumph until all the earth shall be gathered unto Thee, and the kingdom be Thine forever."

EVENING.

"Thou dwellest in eternity; before Thee all the spheres are lifted up, and the stars are but the dust of Thy feet. Thou borrowest of none, and lendest to all—eternal giving hath not impoverished Thee. Thy wisdom and knowledge are everywhere. Thou bearest in Thy bosom the burden of the universe, *and yet art* never weary. Thy power, how easily it *creates and* how easily sustains! With infinite profu-

sion Thou hast filled space with innumerable worlds; and this world on which we dwell, how hast Thou thronged it in every part with life! And Thou dost always watch and care for Thy creatures; there is not even the gauzy fly of summer that escapes Thy notice, not a sparrow falls to the ground without Thee, and even the hairs of our head are numbered. Yet these are but the outside of Thy dominions; it is Thy heart makes Thee God, not Thy hand. Thy goodness, Thy gentleness, Thy nobleness, Thy generosity, Thy disinterestedness, these make Thee God, and all heaven rejoices in the atmosphere of Thy love. And now that we know Thee, and have learned that love is the well-spring from Thy throne, we rejoice in Thy glory, and in the majesty of Thy nature, for the greater Thy wisdom and power, the greater Thy tenderness and graciousness. No longer do we fear Thee, but with bounding hearts, O blessed Saviour, we love thee! Thou who hast given Thyself for us, with such immeasurable grace, how canst Thou needlessly hurt any of Thy creatures? We come to Thee as children, and spontaneously out of the fullness of our hearts we call thee 'Father.' . . . . . .

"We thank Thee that so many in our midst have learned to know Thee thus—that into so many hearts the Holy Spirit has shined, chasing away the darkness and the shadows, and bringing in the blessed life and liberty of the gospel. We beseech of Thee that the number of the reclaimed may be multiplied; may

none here despise their birthright, nor count themselves unworthy of everlasting life. May those bands which unite us on earth be made yet dearer and closer in heaven—may we who have sat together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus here, possess the assured hope that we shall stand together in Thy heavenly kingdom. . . .

"We ask these things of Thee, not for our own worthiness, but because we know Thy nature. It *is* more blessed for Thee to give than to receive, and we ask Thee to please Thyself by enriching us."

"We rejoice that we ever learned of Thee that Thou didst ever take such pains that we should know Thee; we thank Thee that Thou didst come among us, humbling Thyself to our low estate, laying aside Thyself because we could not bear the full revelation of Thy nature, and in great gentleness imparting to us only so much as we were able to receive. And now Thou art so intimately associated with all nature, and there are so many things which represent Thee to us, that we no longer ask, 'Where is the Lord our God?' Thy glory shines out in the face of Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son and our well-beloved Saviour. And now, Lord Jesus, we adore Thee, we praise Thee, we magnify Thee, we consecrate ourselves to Thee, we yield to Thee gladly all Thou dost so sweetly ask of us, and when Thou hast been to us bread to nourish our *hungering* souls, water to quench our thirst, our shep-

herd to seek us when wandering, our guide to direct us in doubt, when Thou hast been our shade in the heat, our refuge in trouble, our light in darkness, our joy in the midst of sorrow, our brother, our husband, our friend—when we have learned to come to Thee with all our burdens, to trust Thee with all our cares, when Thou hast taught us that we can do nothing without Thee, and we have found by blessed experience that we can do all things through Thee, what have we left for any other? *Thou art our God.* There is no room in our heart for another; we have no worship to give beyond the love we bear to Thee. When at last we shall be exalted to heaven, and, standing in Thy presence with our glorified nature, we are made Thy companions, then we may be able to understand the Father and the Spirit; but now, Thou art the door into the fold, yea, the Shepherd himself; we lean upon Thee, we rejoice in Thee, we give Thee all we have to give. Thou art our all, Jesus, Redeemer, Master! . . .

"May the Sabbath be to us a joy, not a day of bondage in the church, nor of iron rule without, nor yet a desecration, but a sweet and precious flower of God springing up in the sandy desert of life. . . .

"May slavery come speedily to an end, and in such a manner that it may be evident to all men that the heart of God is against it, that it is abhorred of heaven and earth, and beloved only of hell. . . .

"Lord, our heart trembles as water when we think

what Thou must see, looking down on Thy poor, despised human family. . . .

"Jesus, we have never entered into the mystery of Thy sufferings in Gethsemane. . . .

"How long, O Lord, how long?"

"We come to Thee as children come to those they love, conscious of wrong, yet more conscious of affection. We know how parents love to listen to their children, though they know beforehand all they have to say; how delighted they are with their thoughts, though they can think much better themselves; and we are glad to know that it is even so with Thee our heavenly Father. . . .

"When all fails around us, we are strong in the surroundings of Thy love; when overcome by the sense of our lowness and sin, it is our joy to know that we stand not in any goodness or strength of our own, but simply in Thy love. And now we desire to enter more into the fullness of this blessed thought; it is our strong fortress into which we run, and are safe. Thou hidest us in Thy heart. And this is our wickedness, that we are so beloved, yet turn love into selfishness. We are orphans, yet our Father never dies. We desire to be delivered from this thraldom; we pray Thee, by the communication of Thy power, to deepen our feelings. May our hearts at last be attuned to love. We have learned by the understanding, by practical wisdom, but there are we most poor

where we should be rich. We desire, indeed, to be freed from all wrong, yet we ask not so much for this as that we may come into this element of love. We desire that we may not be obliged to *summon up* love, but that we may learn to exercise it unconsciously, spontaneously. . . .

"It is true that Thou art a consuming fire, yet it is only because to the corrupt all goodness is consuming. Thy nature is *love*. How different are we, how special is our love, how general our selfishness! . . .

"The earth is Thine, men are Thine, though we scarce could think it. Thou dost turn the earth as the mother rocks her cradle. . . .

"The miseries of men are such that the stoutest angel might well be appalled to look on them, yet we believe that the race is Thine. . . .

"Lord Jesus, we are impatient, and we know it, but Thou art never impatient. Thousands of years roll by, and they seem long to us, but they are only as yesterday to Thee, who hast all leisure at Thy command."

FROM THE OPENING PRAYER, SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 23.

"We come to Thee as pupils to a teacher, and wait for instruction. Thou art never weary of our education — love never wearies, and Thou art love. We almost rejoice that we have so many necessities, since they bring us so often to Thee. We rejoice in

our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest on us. . . .

"We believe in Thee now, not because we have heard of Thee, but because we know Thee for ourselves. We have tried Thee, and found Thee *our* Saviour, *our* Redeemer. We have proved Thee, blessed Spirit, our Sanctifier, our Comforter, our Guide."

THE SAME MORNING.

"Thanks to Thee, thou guiding Saviour, Thou dost not weary of us, Thou forgettest all Thy past services, and forgettest also our ingratitude. . . .

"And now, blessed Saviour, who shall separate us from Thee? To whom should we go, if we should leave Thee—what is there for us away from Thee? Thou art our sap, our vine, our head—what would become of us if separated from Thee? But we will not be separated from Thee; nothing in life or in death, in the present or in the future, in time or eternity shall be able to separate us from Thee. We are Thine, living or dying; and our anxiety is not whether we shall be Thine, but *being* Thine that we may be found worthy of our sonship. We desire to bear Thy name, not fearfully, not as a fragile thing easily broken, but as a precious and sacred pledge—as that which is dearest to our heart. We would bear the name of Christ as men wear badges of honor. We *would* make it our pride, our honor— . . .

"*We* beseech Thee, Lord Jesus, let not Thy heart

be small in our midst; be not content with the harvest Thou hast already reaped, but gather on, leave none even for gleaning. Let every heart in this congregation be Thine."

SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 13.

"Our hearts cry out for Thee, our Father. Thou art endeared to every one of us. We do not seek to persuade Thee as though Thou wert unwilling. Thou hast ever been beforehand with us, Thou hast ever done more abundantly than we asked, yea, Thou hast ever been hearing us before we called upon Thee. We rejoice to come to Thee with all the freedom of friendship, with the sweet familiarity of love, boldly, openly, joyously. It is pleasant to us to speak to Thee, and it is pleasant to Thee to listen to us. We believe that it is with Thee as with earthly friends, who, however much they may intend to love, to give, and to bless, yet are quickened by our longings and reciprocations. When our children lay their heads on our shoulder, or in our bosom, and ask of us, we are delighted, and we believe that it is even so with Thee. We thank Thee that when we are converted our hearts cry out toward Thee, 'Abba, Father.' We are adopted when we feel adoption. . . .

"Thy mercies are so many that we become insensible to them from their very abundance. We grow discontented in the midst of mercies, and call evil that which is only lesser good—in no part of our life

are we so deficient as in gratitude. May we find in every hour something for which to praise God. We stand before Thy sovereign goodness in amazement; who can fathom its depths? Thy paths drop fatness, Thou carriest perpetual blossoms before Thee, and fruits fall down behind Thee—and shall mute seasons outdo us in praise! . . .

"We thank Thee that so many here can call Thee 'Father;' can say, 'I am the child of God'—children, though they have but just crossed the threshold of their Father's house. If they should become discouraged by reason of the way, may they learn to overcome all difficulties by 'looking unto Jesus'—may they know this blessed secret of strength and victory. How poor must he be that cannot look to Jesus, and how rich he that can; how weak are they that cannot look, and how strong they that can! . . .

"More beautiful than all pictures, more radiant than earth's fairest scenery is this vision—hold it ever before us, Thou blessed one, and when overborne by temptation, and almost ready to give up the strife, may we hear that silver voice from above, saying, 'Look unto Jesus, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of God. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.' . . .

"Deliver those that are in bondage, prepare them to enter into the manhood bequeathed to every human being by the death of Christ."